■ LIFESTYLE/C1
'Something to Crow About': Cocks, corals and criminals

■ SPORTS/A32
It's Dallas vs Miami for NBA crown

■ WORLD/A28
Bolivia president gives one-fifth of territory to farmers

■ ENTERTAINMENT/A2-8
Juday, Ryan to wed next year, says her mother

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, June 5, 2006 ●● 7 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 177 P18 www.inq7.net

SUDOKU

BEGINNING TODAY, Sudoku, a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers, will be published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer. It will be run in the Comic Relief sections Monday through Saturday and in the Sunday Inquirer Magazine on Sundays.

2 cloned US mules make successful racing debuts

WINNEMUCCA, NEVADA —Two qualifying heats, two wire-to-wire victories, two nearly identical times. It was almost like the same mule ever twice.

Idaho Gem, the world's first equine clone, and his brother, Idaho Blue, made

2 CLONED, A12

Congress adds ₱4B to budget of DepEd

Bicameral body cites classroom shortage

By TJ Burgonio

AS PUBLIC SCHOOLS open their doors today with the perennial shortages in classrooms, textbooks and teachers, parents and teachers might find comfort elsewhere: Senators and congressmen have reached a consensus to raise the Department of Education's budget.

The lawmakers met for their first bicameral conference on the proposed ₱1.053-trillion 2006 national budget yesterday, agreeing "in principle" to increase the DepEd's ₱108-billion outlay by some ₱4 billion but keeping their hardline stance on the rest of the items.

"It's good that we agreed on one item. Both panels agreed to solve the problem of classroom loading, as well as the shortage in teachers, chairs and textbooks," said Sen. Manuel Villar Jr., chair

CONGRESS, A22

More Education stories on Pages A20, A21, A23 and A26

TWO-IN-ONE CLASSROOM: A familiar scene in learning institutions coping with classroom shortages takes place at the Geronima Santiago School in Manila in this file photo. Two classes are held simultaneously but handled separately by two teachers in one room. RAFAEL

STATE OF RP EDUCATION

Learning test scores below world average

(Second of a series)

OFFICIAL STATISTICS ON THE state of Philippine education are grim.

Of the 37.6 million Filipinos aged 10 to 64 years, 9.2 million or 3% percent are "functionally illiterate" says the Department of Education.

This means these people are unable to read, write, subtract and add, or understand simple instructions—something someone normally learns by Grade 4.

The national "functional literacy rate" is 84 percent, but the DepEd says this is "probably overstated."

TEAM Report
Fernando del Mundo
Chief, FDI i-Team

In spite of the imperatives of universal elementary education, roughly 10 percent of children do not have access to it.

Sixty-eight percent of students complete the elementary grades, 42 percent finish high school, and 34 percent graduate from college.

Of Grade 6 kids, only 26 percent have a mastery of English, 25 percent of Science and 51 percent of Math.

Only 7 percent of senior high school students had mastered English; 2 percent, Science, and 36 percent, Math.

The national average score in the TIMSS (Trends to Math and Science Survey) in 2003 was 378 in math—89 points behind the international average and 227 points away from the highest score notched by Singapore.

"Clearly, these scores are un-

LEARNING, A22

Group lists 168 leftists missing

By Norman Bordadora and Luige A. del Puerto

IT IS A DAY OBSERVED IN MANY countries around the world but one no family would wish they would ever have to commemorate. It is a day to remember people who disappeared into thin air.

The human rights group Karapatan yesterday marked the international day of the "desaparecidos," or the disappeared, with a call on security forces to finally bring out the people they may have abducted.

In a statement, Karapatan said its tally showed that 168 people had become victims of "involuntary disappearances" since President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power in 2001.

It said the latest victim was Philip Limjoco, one of about 50 people whom state prosecutors had charged with rebellion for alleged involvement in a Left-Right conspiracy to overthrow

ENDURY, A13

Tin-pot dictator rises from Edsa II

By Amando Doronila

THE TRANSFORMATION OF President Macapagal-Arroyo from a creature of people power upheaval to a tin-pot authoritarian during the past five years is one of the most amazing episodes of political

ANALYSIS

change in the erratic cycle of Philippine democracy.

Three decades after the overthrow of the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos, the Philippines has never been more threatened with a reimposition of another authoritarian rule than it is today under a democratically elected presidency.

Five years to since People Power II handed power to then Vice President Arroyo, the country has squeezed through a state of national emergency (in February),

THIRD EYE, A13

'PINOY BIG BROTHER'

CHINESE-FILIPINO teen Kimberly "Kim" Chiu greets her fans after winning the Pinoy Big Brother Teen Edition. NOTIMEX

Chinoy teener from Cebu wins reality TV show

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Entertainment

CHINESE-FILIPINO KIMBERLY "KIM" Chiu of Cebu was declared the big winner of "Pinoy Big Brother's Teen Edition" during the finals held at the Araw Theater last Saturday night.

Kim bested 13 other housemates in her months-long stay inside the Big Brother House, garnering a whopping 626,363 text votes or 41.4 percent of the total—more than of her nearest rival Milan Lee who only posted 313,032 votes or 20.7 percent.

Filipino-American Gerald Anderson of General Santos City placed third with 203,234 votes or 13.4 percent, while Clare Cabigale of Bukidnon was fourth with 276,390 votes or 18.3 percent.

Kim's prizes include: a condominium unit in Chateau Valenzuela, an adventure package, a four-year college scholarship from Abbá and P1 million in cash.

Resplendent in a puffy

CHINOY, A4

STUDENTS and teachers at the Uyugan Elementary School on Batan Island in Batanes attend the opening of a Library Hub as a repository of books that will be circulated to schools around the province.

Batanes school kids meet Frodo

By Alexis Paya

BATAN CHILDREN WILL FINALLY visit Frodo and Middle Earth, the legendary setting of J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings," thanks to Library Hubs that local education officials opened in Batanes last week.

Tolkien's trilogy, as well as award-winning children's books by local authors, will be available in six Library Hubs found in the municipalities of Basco, Mahatao, Ivana and Uyugan—all in Batan Island—as well as on Sabtang and Itbayat islands.

According to local education officials, some 20,000 books will soon be circulating in schools around the province. They gave the hopefuls a tour of the Library Hub at the Uyugan Elementary School, which can be reached in 45 minutes from the provincial capital of Basco.

All 66 students of the school will be able to read the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, a donation from neo-dominican league Cruz.

They can also choose books from local publishing houses, such as Adarna, Tahanan, Museo Pambata, Carlos Hermanos, Anvil, ORE Bookmark, Ayala Museum and Lampara.

BATANES, A6

Clash on wages looms, warn militants

By Leila B. Salaverria

A SHOWDOWN LOOMS BETWEEN WORKERS and Malacañang.

A militant labor group yesterday blasted Día on the government's tepid response to the P125 across-the-board daily wage hike bill passed on second reading at the House of Representatives.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye had earlier said that although the House of Representatives passed the regional wage boosts were the appropriate forum to determine the workers' needs.

Various labor groups have long been pushing for a legislated wage hike for the country's workers. They claim the minimum wage can hardly meet their needs, especially with the continuously rising prices of basic commodities.

The proposed bill is being pushed by party-list groups Anakpawis, Akbayan and Partido Manggagawa.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo and puppets of the big employers in the administration are inciting a major political showdown with Filipino workers by killing the passage of the legislated P125 across-the-board pay hike for the working class," the Bayanbased group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said in a statement.

The group also accused the President of "systematically" working for rights for bigger wages just to appease the government's business clients, describing the move as "outrageous and totally revolting."

Pamalakaya national chairman Fernando Hicap said Malacañang's position was a "betrayal" and a "massacre" of workers' rights. He said workers should take their grievance to the streets.

"This is an extreme expression of class betrayal by the Arroyo administration. The Filipino working class must assert their collective rights and transform the streets in Resistance Mendiola against Arroyo's massacre of workers' rights to higher wages and wage increase," Hicap said.

Pamalakaya also said the administration did not want to support the legislated wage hike because it did not want the credit for it to go to Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran or any of the members of the so-called Batasan 5, namely, Bayan Muna Representatives Satur Ocampo, Teddy Casiño and Joel Virador, Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano and Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza.

All six lawmakers faced imminent arrest in the previous administration and were accused of rebellion. Beltran, in fact, has been indicted for rebellion.

"She is afraid Beltran and the Batasan 5 lawmakers would receive the credit for pushing the P125-wage hike bill in Congress.

This is why the President is not supportive of the proposed legislated wage hike, aside from her firm core duty bias in favor of big corporate and local capitalists," Ocampo said.

Cops report no progress in Sanchez bomb probe

By Luige A. del Puerto

FOUR DAYS AFTER THE BOMB ATTACK ON Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez that killed two of his aides, police scientists admitted they were still at a loss as to who exactly has died and why.

Police had earlier said they suspected organized crime groups based in Batangas involved in oil pilferage, drug trafficking, extortion and kidnaping may have been behind Thursday's attempt on Sanchez' life.

But as of yesterday, the police were not any closer to a definite list of suspects or motives, an Inquirer source said, adding that "there are many possible motives behind."

Investigators had also not discounted other angles in the attack, such as politics, dissatisfaction or even a lobo tie-up.

Another angle being looked into was Sanchez's crackdown on the illegal numbers game "jueteng."

"It's early and it is premature to make [one]," the source said, although he quickly added that police were not ruling out the possibility that someone or some group wanted to eliminate the governor tagged in the threats as a jueteng operator in Batangas. Sanchez had denied the accusation.

"Those were usual rumors trying to set up guerrilla-type operations," the Inquirer source, who sought anonymity because he was not authorized to speak, said.

Organized crime groups

Police, however, appear to be focusing on the organized crime groups in Batangas.

A ranking police officer earlier said these crime groups had the capability to fight back and, thus, remained suspects in the bomb attack.

The officer, who is familiar with the politics and security of Batangan, said one of these groups had once displayed its readiness to clash with the police.

"There are syndicated crime groups who control routes and extort from fuel tankers," said the officer.

"Those crime groups being dismantled by the governor ... have the capability to fight back because they are armed. At one time, our SAF [Special Action Force] had bought combat [tank] groups. Their hideout was raided, and they fought back," he said.

The officer could no longer recall other details of the operation, except that one of the suspects had lobbed a grenade and wounded a SAF officer.

Senior Supt. Eduardo Padilla, head of the investigating team for the attack, earlier identified one such group as the Shark Shark Gang, a drunken syndicate operating in Batangas City and in the towns of Bauan and San Pascual.

'Protection money'

Aside from hijackings and highway robberies, the group also demands "protection money" from businessmen in the Batangas International Port.

Sanchez had helped Batangas businessmen seek the intervention of then Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes to put a stop to these illegal activities at the port.

The Inquirer source said a key to successfully cracking the case was to reconstruct the bomb used in the attack.

"Right now, the rape of bomb is the only clue [to] connection we have. The question is, who has the capability to carry out such an attack?" he said.

But a report from the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory said that some of the explosive had been contaminated.

From the investigations it was learned that curious people had crowded around Sanchez's Hummer G2V shortly before it left the capitol and exploded on Thursday night.

Several non-blast investigators had beaten the bomb squad to the scene, and Sanchez might have watched away most of the evidence when they responded and put out the fire.

"Likewise, there is a strong possibility that most of the pieces of evidence that will prove the kind of device used could have disintegrated because of the fire," Chief Supt. Reynold Rosero, head of the Bomb Squad, said in his report.

Sources said his team was having a difficult time reconstructing the bomb because only a few of its parts had been found.

Susan to accept nat'l award for FPJ but will snub rites

By Christine O. Avendaño

MOVIE ACTRESS SUSAN ROCES and her family will not be appearing at the Malacañang ceremony on Friday that will confer the National Artist award on her late husband, movie "king" and former presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

Roces sent word to the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA) that she had asked family friend, respected film director and National Artist Eddie Romero, to accept on behalf of the family the posthumous award for her husband from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

But Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said yesterday that in accordance with Malacañang protocol regarding presidential awards and based on the "Statute of acceptance" of the award in the NCAA, only family members should accept the award.

Defensor said he hoped the Poe family would reconsider and send a relative to accept the award to be conferred personally by Mr Arroyo.

He said the NCAA would inform Roces about the protocol.

"I was understand if Ms Roces cannot accept the award but hopefully, she would send someone from the family," Defensor told the reporters.

Roces's decision to snub the Palace event was not surprising. Her allies had advised her to do so since Malacañang announced last month that Poe and five others were this year's National Artist awardees.

Roces herself had been vocal in her accusations that Mr Arroyo had stolen the 2004 elections from her husband.

Poe had run for and lost the presidency to Mr Arroyo in May 2004. He died in December 2004 after suffering a massive stroke.

Defensor said the NCAA wrote to Roces last May 23 to inform her that her husband had been proclaimed a National Artist for "Poe's significant works and achievements in the field of film."

The commission then invited Mrs's widow to attend the conferment ceremony to be held on Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. on June 9.

The family was also invited to attend the Order of National Artist exhibit and the Pasinaya sa Pambansang Alagad ng Sining to be held on the same day at 5 and 7 p.m., respectively, at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in Pasay City.

In a letter to Roces, the NCCA "invited (Susan) as a family representative for a two-minute response during the conferment ceremony."

On May 29, Roces wrote back informing the commission that she would send Rommy Jurinal, according to Defensor.

"I have requested Eddie Romero to represent my family," Roces said, explaining that Romero was "a close friend of my husband" who had worked with him in the 'filming of Iyahk,' one of (Poe's) memorable films."

STILL WAITING AND HOPING... Relatives and friends of people who "simply disappeared into thin air" protest their disappearance during rites marking International Day of the Disappeared at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani in Quezon City. (See story on Page A1.) AMY TORRES

Nene sees no hope for Con-Ass

By TJ Burgonio

SENATE MINORITY LEADER AQUILINO "Nene" Pimentel Jr. doubts there is ongoing dialogue between senators and congressmen on Charter change would yield positive results given the two sides' hard-line positions.

In Pimentel's view, continuing the dialogue is futile.

"I don't see the proposed constituent assembly (Con-Ass) happening. I think it's dead," he said in a statement.

Pimentel said the dialogue was doomed unless the House dropped its stand that any amendments to the Constitution could be approved by Congress convened into a constituent assembly voting jointly.

There was "no way," he said, the senators would change their position that amendments must be voted on separately by both chambers.

The minority leader spoke on the senate's anti-Cha-cha campaign before a multisectoral assembly in Bacolod City organized by Bishop Vicente Navarra.

Severia presided over the start of a six-day caravan to oppose the moves to amend the 1987 Constitution.

Some 40 vehicles joined the caravan that took off after a 3:30 p.m. send-off Mass at the San Sebastian Cathedral in front of the Bacolod public plaza.

Vehicles displayed streamers that read "No to Charter change now. Upheld truth, freedom and justice," and "No to false People's Initiative."

Navarra hoped the caravan, which would end in Bacolod on June 9, would awaken the people to assert their rights by standing up for the truth and defending it.

The Bacolod bishop, however, clarified that the Church was not against amending the Charter, per se.

"We are not against Cha-cha. What we are against is holding it now ... it is very untimely," Navarra said. With a report from Carla P. Gomez, Pilar Pilapil-Barroa

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, June 5, 2006
9th Week in Ordinary Time
Readings

1st Reading: 2 P 1:2-7
Gospel: Mark 12:1-12

Using parables, Jesus wants us to say "A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a hole for the wine press and built a watch tower. Then he leased the vineyard to farmers and went abroad.

At the time he sent a servant to receive from the farmers his share of the fruit. But they seized the servant, stood him and sent him back empty-handed. Again he sent another servant. They shot stones into the head and treated him shamefully. He sent another and they killed him. In the same way they treated many others, some they struck and others they killed. One was still left, his beloved son. And so, last of all, he sent him to the farmers, for he said: 'They will respect my son.'

But those farmers said to one another: 'This is the one who is to inherit the vineyard. Let's kill him and the property will be ours.' So they seized him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. Now, what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy those farmers and give the vineyard to others."

And Jesus added, "Have you not read this text of the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected has become the keystone. This was the Lord's doing, and we marvel at it."

They wanted to arrest him for they realized this Jesus story was parable for them, but they were afraid of the crowd. So they left him and went away.

Comment:

The Church is in good hands and rejoice in our love all its extraordinary superiority and knowledge of Christ has been shared with us. Let us begin. We have to realize the necessary for a life of piety, devotion, virtue, refinement and discernment. Remember that we do this primarily together in community, as we dedicate ourselves for our growth in grace as we learn to care for one another and to surround ourselves with the knowledge that we are loved and cared for by God, but what are we doing with it?

Batanes school kids meet Frodo

From page A1

Book titles include "Tuesday the Little Whirling Star" by May Tobias; "The Boy Who Fixed Five Lolas" by Cherie Chong, and "Sagalot Ang Kati Kati ng Uhi Ito" by Luis Gamuzon.

Encyclopedias are also available for browsing. Coming soon are the Harry Potter series of books, according to school officials.

Already, the project has bought P80 million worth of books, mainly from local publishers. Since the project started in 2004, some 30 Library Hubs have opened as well open in July in locations like Baguio, Cotabato, Davao and Iloilo cities.

Carmen Bautista, education district superintendent in Batanes, said the lessons that without a Library Hub, access to literary masterpieces and local books by students would not be possible.

"Without the hub, there is no way we could make these books available to our students, unlike schools in the mainland where access is easy. This is actually the first time students had copies of these books. They will be helpful in improving reading proficiency among our students," Bautista said.

Reading materials outside the curriculum had been difficult to come by until now, she noted. The system was also convenient since textbooks would be delivered.

Former Education Undersecretary Amo Miguel Luz, who remained himself in the project despite resigning from office in April, said the Library Hub would help moderate the habit of reading.

Help local publishers

Although literacy in Batanes is high, he said "the problem is expanding from the general literature of textbooks to other reading interest. No one develops a reading habit from textbooks."

Luz also said the Department of Education (DepEd) plans to buy P110 million worth of children's books, mainly from local publishers. He explained that a panel of teachers, experts, parents and students published locally and chose the best ones, as well as those which had won local awards.

He added that aside from improving reading competencies and developing the reading habit among students, it was the DepEd's way of supporting local publishers.

"We need to support them because buying children's books from foreign publishers is expensive," Luz said.

He explained that the Library Hub was only "a temporary solution" to the problem of low reading achievement rates among students. "The goal is that every school should have its own library."

According to Luz, the department hoped to open 100 Library Hubs in 100 school divisions around the country by 2008. By then, some 15 million books would have been bought, contributing P9 million to the local book publishing industry.

Luz also said he and other private individuals were putting up a Library Hub foundation which would look for private funds to also build centers building Hubs around the country.

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Chinoy teener wins . . .

From page A1

rubble Larry Tiglauan, gawad, Ritz was also the crowd favorite in the 3,000-seating Aliw Theater. Her first channel her cry, breathing humor in support of the 16-year-old Cebuana and her "teen mom" partner Gerald.

Just what made Ritz stand out from among the 14 housemates, who in turn were screened down from an insane 10,000 hopefuls that auditioned?

PBB director Laurenti Dyogi said that it was Ritz's natural charisma that endeared her to viewers. "She's wholesome and very pleasant. She laughs a lot. That was how she coped with the stress of their 42-day stay in the PBB house."

Ritz reportedly told family friend, resident psychologist of PBB, that she didn't have a clue. "I am just happy that my parents and siblings now see me in a different light. My sisters were surprised to learn that I could sing."

GMA-7 CEO did not allow the winner to be interviewed by anyone from the press until after their exclusive appearance on "The Buzz" yesterday at 4 p.m.)

Dyogi added that Ritz had a wide fan base. "We cannot discount the large Chinese and Visayan votes. Also, a lot of Filipinos are heartened with Chinese culture because of all the asian telenovelas."

In the end, Cebuana charm won the day.

"She also sings Chinese," Dyogi pointed out—almost in an afterthought, as if to reassure to the media critics who had dismissed previous PBB alumni as untalented.

Worries passed

For the third straight time, worries on power reigned on the ABS-CBN reality show after Ilan topped the last Edition.

In the show's first season, Irma Tanauan emerged as big winner; in the Celebrity Edition, it was Shamcey Supsup.

Just what is the significance of PBB's all-female lineup of winners? Is it a reflection of the Kapamilya network's largely female/family-oriented demographics?

Is it a subsidiary of the supposed "matriarchal" nature of Philippine society?

More than a talent search, Ritz has believed the show serves as a "social experiment," a throwback "Big Brother" concept, in which "we see exactly how the public is reacting to people watching."

It's not just an experiment in reputation, he said, but it can also be a study on the setting/patterns of Filipino relationships.

"If you read the PBB forum online, the reasons the viewers put for favoring certain housemates can be various." Dyogi pointed out. "I can range from something as shallow as good looks to as obvious as regional affiliation."

Reformat

Dyogi also revealed that PBB was going to be reformatted once a radio search, called "Pinoy Dream Academy" in its new full (three-month) version in August.

This is probably the network's answer to "Philippine Idol," which premieres on ABC-5 today.

"Pinoy Dream Academy is actually a separate franchise, also from Endemol, the same Dutch company behind Big Brother," Dyogi explained.

"In London, it's called 'Star Academy.' In France, it's 'Star academy' in Spain and Italy, 'La Academia.' It's a lot like PBB in the sense that the students live together. But the difference is that they will be trained to be performers. Big Brother wasn't be around. Instead, there'll be a principal and different instructors who will give workshops on singing, dancing and other aspects of performance."

But will "Pinoy Dream Academy" gobroad-to-broad with "IPIDOL?"

RP Idol, look out

"I think 'IP Idol' will just be seen a week, but 'Pinoy Dream Academy' will come out mightly," Dyogi said. "We just want to give PBB a rest this year, so that viewers will miss it. We want to protect the PBB franchise."

Sheldon Bailey, supervising producer of Freemantle Media ("IP Idol" producer) and consulting producer of "KP Idol" told the business in an interview: "The 'IP Idol' from this has been successful in 25 countries. We are confident that it'll wipe out copycat shows anywhere in the world."

Roberto Ibarrara, managing director for TV operations, sales and marketing of ABC-5, assured that in the Philippines, "Big Brother" had "evolved from a naughty, almost, soft-porn show for Europe) into a charity/socially-relevant program.

MIGUEL LEE: Second

GERALD ANDERSON: Third

CLAIRE CAIBUGAN: Fourth

THE ASTRA GROUP, INC.

Correction

IN YESTERDAY'S ISSUE, A STORY ON PAGE A2—"SERVE HERO ward's fate, Army-hearted"—misnamed the owner of the coffee-making machine at the funeral Mass for Senior Master Sgt. Arturo C. Tempard—not Tempard—and Fe Bonifacio—not Nolfacio—then.

* * *

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"St. Luke's is very close to my heart," says Mr. Laudato. Physicians in Guam referred his wife Amalie to St. Luke's Heart Institute, where she underwent angioplasty and abdominal aneurysm surgery while Mr. Laudato himself availed of the Cardiac Executive Check-up.

"The doctors at the Heart Institute are attentive and communicate medical advice in a way that inspired confidence in my wife and us, her family. The nurses are skilled and compassionate," says Mr. Laudato.

He reveals that an increasing number of people in Guam and Micronesia swear by the excellent patient care provided by St. Luke's. He says that his wife, an allied health professional who works at Guam Memorial Hospital, heard of the good work done at St. Lukes from patients, physicians and colleagues. "So when it was time for us to decide where to seek all-round medical treatment, we were able to confidently choose St. Luke's."

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"For me," says Mr. Laudato, "St. Luke's is the best."

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Customs take up 36% in 1st five months

By Lolita B. Salcedo

THE TOTAL COLLECTION OF the Bureau of Customs surged by 36 percent to P73.0 billion in the first five months of the year, or up by P20 billion from the P53.0 billion collected in the same period last year.

The January to May 2006 collection figure was up by P4.1 billion or nearly 6 percent higher than the collection target of P68.9 billion.

In a statement, Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales attributed the bureau's performance to the drastic collectors who had met their own target earnings, describing them as "heroic."

At the same time, he warned collectors in underperforming districts that they faced reassignment or removal if they consistently failed to meet their targets.

"We have to ensure that uncollected revenues shown are achieved in all ports across the country," Morales said.

The BOC has been tasked to collect nearly P200 billion in 2006.

Among the top performing collectors' districts in Manila were the ports of Manila and Batangas.

The Port of Manila posted a P6.421 billion collection, 0.5 percent higher than its P5.897-billion target. The Port of Batangas collected P1.427 billion, 25 percent higher than its P1.710-billion target. Also meeting their targets were the ports of San Fernando, Iloilo, Legaspi, Tacloban and Surigao.

Surpassed its target

From January to May this year, the Port of Manila registered total collections of P26.771 billion, accounting for 35 percent of the bureau's total collections so far this year.

It was the 40th straight month this year the Port of Manila had surpassed its collection target.

Among the three Manila ports, only the Port of Manila had exceeded its targets since Hercelie B. Bautista Jr. took over its helm in the middle of last year.

On the other hand, the BOC identified four districts underperforming: the Port of Cebu, Cagayan de Oro, Tacloban, Davao, Clark, Subic and the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

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Court upholds falsification raps vs ex-Caloocan exec

By Helen F. Flores

THE SANDIGANBAYAN (FIRST DIVISION) HAS upheld the SC ouster of falsification charges filed by the Office of the Ombudsman against former Caloocan City chief accountant Edna V. Gamboa involving P29.22 million in city government funds in 1995.

In a six-page resolution, the antigraft court junked Gamboa's motion seeking dismissal of the proceedings due to the alleged failure of the Ombudsman to conduct a proper preliminary investigation.

Gamboa claimed she was denied due process when the anomalous disbursement vouchers for the acquisition of a separate cullinan of alleged violation of the State Audit Code by which she received the 29 indictments now pending in the Sandiganbayan Second Division.

But the court pushed Gamboa's argument stating that the two criminal offenses were clear by themselves to reflect next to her by the Ombudsman.

It pointed out that total investigation Officer Angelito Singzon even testified the account that she was being possible indictment for malversation, falsification of official documents and graft in orders dated Aug. 11 and Sept. 22, 1997.

Based on an inquiry conducted by the Commission on Audit, Gamboa was found to have illegally approved cash advances by disbursement officer who also certified that they had liquidated the funds previously released to them by the city government.

According to the COA, Gamboa signed a total of 27 disbursement vouchers for Statement to Using and 10 for Nestor B. Torres falsely declaring that the two no longer had outliquidated cash advances.

As this developed, state prosecutors asked the Sandiganbayan Second Division Friday to drop the criminal charges against former Mayor Gonzalez Parejas Ona after she agreed to turn state witness in the P222-million graft case against former Mayor Amando S. Vizconde and five others.

Assistant Special Prosecutor III Rodrigo S. Coquia told the antigraft court that Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez had approved the discharge of Ona from the case since she was instrumental in the filing of the graft case against Vizconde in 2002.

Complainant Emiliano Torres, a former councilor, said Ona had personal knowledge of the alleged anomalies surrounding the award of the P222-million contract for the construction of the Malabon municipal hall in 1999 to an unqualified bidder.

Vizconde, as municipal mayor, was the concurrent chair of the prequalification, bids and awards committee for the construction project.

His codefendants were committee members Ma. Lida Sarmiento, Pio Dadula, Violeta Cruz, Lauro S. Baja and Ernesto S. Palacanas.

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Solon laments tree loss

THE SKYROCKETING prices of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) could be the greatest threat to the country's remaining forest cover, a Mindanao lawmaker said yesterday.

Rep. Jesli Miguel Lubitd of Bukidnon, author of the biofuels bill, warned that "mostly LPG for stoves as a matter of trend, correct," noting that six million households burned wood three times a day to cook food prior to the rise in LPG prices.

"With the country's primary forest cover down to no less 800,000 hectares—or 2.7 percent of total land area—the government should be worried sick," Lubitd said.

He then urged the government to institutionalize the planting of rubber trees (scientific name: Jatropha curcas) to arrest the further dwindling of forest cover.

"To prevent the mass migration of trees and their conversion into firewood it is to encourage people to grow rubber, the fast-growing shrub whose seeds can be processed into cooking oil or car fuel," Lubitd said.

He urged government agencies to invite private companies to apply for agroforestry contracts as mandated by Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Administrative Order 2003-29, Michael Lim Ubac

PUBLIC APOLOGY

TRIDEL TECHNOLOGIES, INC., through its Board of Directors and Officers, hereby publicly apologizes for the inconvenience that may have been occasioned to unsuspected conduct of "vulnerability test" on the website of INQ7 Interactive, Inc. with address "www.inq7.net" on or about January 31, 2006, without the latter's consent or authority.

After due consideration, TRIDEL TECHNOLOGIES, INC., through its Board of Directors and Officers, hereby acknowledges and fully accepts the responsibility for the aforesaid act which the Corporation neither tolerates nor supports.

In pursuit of good faith, this public apology is being issued as part of the Compromise Agreement between INQ7 Interactive, Inc. and Tridel Technologies, Inc. and Mr. Arturo H. Santamaga, Jr. entitled "INQ7.NET, INQ7.COM, Roberto Ongsingco, Jr. and Santamaga, Jr. et al" docketed as I.S. No. 2005-697 for violation of R.A. 8792 pending preliminary investigation before the Department of Justice, Manila.

TRIDEL TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

PUBLIC APOLOGY

The undersigned, ARTURO H. SARMIENTO, JR. hereby publicly apologizes for conducting "vulnerability test" on the website of INQ7 Interactive, Inc. with address "www.inq7.net" on or about January 31, 2006, without the latter's consent or authority.

After due consideration, the undersigned hereby acknowledges and fully accepts the responsibility for the aforesaid act.

In pursuit of good faith, this public apology is being issued as part of the Compromise Agreement between INQ7 Interactive, Inc. and Tridel Technologies, Inc. and the undersigned that would cause the withdrawal of the case filed by INQ7 Interactive, Inc. against Tridel Technologies, Inc. and the undersigned entitled "INQ7.NET, INQ7.COM, Roberto Ongsingco, Jr. and Santamaga, Jr. et al" docketed as I.S. No. 2005-697 for violation of R.A. 8792 pending preliminary investigation before the Department of Justice, Manila.

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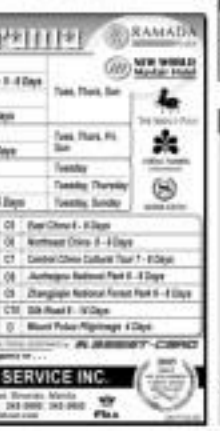
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Cruz: Church stomped 'Da Vinci'

By Christine Y. Esguerra

A SENIOR CATHOLIC bishop yesterday declared the triumph of Christianity over "The Da Vinci Code," the Hollywood adaptation of the best-selling novel that scandalized Christian belief which began showing in theaters nationwide ago.

"Christianity is receiving the worst. The Church is still as it was before," said Archbishop Oscar Cruz, former president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

"After so much international hype and so much local fuss, the 'Da Vinci Code' film is now seen as a nonissue. There was so much debate, outrage and controversies over nothing."

Jesus Christ, whose virginity and divinity were questioned in the book by Dan Brown, is still the same "rocking revolutionary and heroic," despite the attacks from both the novel and the film, Cruz said.

"Fiction about Christ and the Church comes and goes but their truth remains," he said.

"The Catholic Church weighs the servitude to lost till the end of time."

But the 2,000-year-old faith wasn't the only "winner" in the controversy generated by Brown and his Hollywood collaborators, he said.

Even if the film didn't live up to hype, Cruz said Brown and Sony Pictures, which produced the movie, were also really winners, raking in millions of dollars in profit.

"Dan Sling is certainly a winner — he made a killing, a film producer has gone to the bank laughing," he said.

The film, starring Tom Hanks, was still a hit even if it failed to impress critics, including those who attended its premiere in Cannes.

Despite the lukewarm reaction to the film, Cruz warned that more attacks on the faith would be coming from people like Brown, a former public school teacher who insisted on the accuracy of his novel.

"Let Catholics be well aware that their faith is some 2,000 years old. It has been, and will still be, assailed by all kinds of intrigues and fakeries. But their faith will continue ever to guide them toward truth and life," he said.

Brown, in his book, flouted the old theory that Jesus had married Mary Magdalene and that they begot children.

The Jesus-Magdalene bloodline remained today and was being protected by a secret group called the Priory of Sion, he wrote.

Biblical experts and apostolic history had dismissed this theory more than two decades ago.

Cruz cautioned against those like Brown against "deliberately offending Christian sensibility."

"There is a whole set of Holocaust literature whatsoever. Before and after, specifically novel," he said. "Even the Pope of the Philippines denounced the movie," he said.

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Tin-pot dictator rises from Edsa II

From page A1

Once again, the government is at war with the communist movement, 17 years after the collapse of communist regimes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

This trend represents a counterflow of Philippine democracy against the historical tide of democratization during the past three decades.

And it raises questions among academics studying global political trends over the direction of Philippine democracy and over whether the Philippines is crying in chart out a neoauthoritarian role in Southeast Asia, as a repressive regime without the formal uniforms of the military junta in Burma (Myanmar).

The Philippines has come under criticism

Group lists 168 leftists missing

From page A1

President Macapagal-Arroyo in February.

"Today, June 4, as nations observe the day of the disappeared, we join the families of those abducted by government forces in their demand to confirm the victims and be given possession of the law," Kampanyo said.

Lingayo had been involved with the Left, but his son, Glenn, told the Inquirer that his father was no longer connected with counter-reward groups and had been engaged in the business of processing scrap rosahol beans.

Glenn said that he and his father were last together in Pampanga on May 8 and that they were supposed to meet again the following day to see Sibi itself in Metro Manila.

"But he never showed up," Glenn said. "I tried calling his cellular phone but it was already turned off."

No response

Kampanyo had asked the military and the police if any of their units had taken Lingayo in—but had not gotten a substantial response from them.

Militant groups have blamed government forces, particularly the military, for the recent wave of killings of political activists in the country.

Kampanyo listed 679 victims as having been arbitrarily killed during the Arroyo's presidency, and the victims included 206 activists and 376 people with no known political affiliation.

The Kampanyo rally, wearing members of militant organizations, including human rights and other advocacy groups, had at least 224 militants killed during the period.

The 60-minute Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) assembly released a "primer" on the killings to show it had a basis for blaming the military.

The primer recounted incidents that, it said, showed that those who had been murdered had been tailed or monitored by military-type men before the killings occurred.

Soldiers allegedly frequented the house of Marcelino Belleza, reported by a witness to the killing of peasants during the Hacienda Luisita massacre about two years ago, before he was killed in December 2004.

Belleza was supposed to have testified in the Senate on the hacienda killings, the primer said.

It said another activist, Victor Corcoran of Anakpawis, had reported on his colleagues about the presence of suspected military agents near his home in Mexico, Pampanga.

Shortly after, he too was killed.

On the other hand, Bayan Muna member Ricardo Up was killed outside his car still in Kawagan City last year after a radio program run by the Philippine Army tagged him as an "emerging leader" of the New People's Army, according to the primer.

In another case, Marcelino Fabula of Anakpawis in Laguna was supposedly interrogated by a military officer days before a militant man with close ties to the soldier shot him dead.

"The Left is being used by the Arroyo government as a tool sure on how to silence the entire nation," said Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo. "The entire nation is awed."

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, in a statement, said he after was working with other government agencies to identify the perpetrators of "the seemingly endless slayings of political activists and members of media to bring them to justice."

"I am generally concerned over what is happening," Gonzales said. "Some quarters blame the government, saying these are part of a plan to declare martial law. Nothing could be further from the truth. The government will not benefit from these killings."

He stressed that "only a government which wishes to self-destruct would create chaos through mass slayings." With a report from Michael Lim Ubac

Gov't sees win over Reds in 10 years

DISAPUNO—THE PHILIPPINES can defeat communist guerrillas within a decade by spending more on national security and social infrastructure, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz said Sunday.

"There is reason to be optimistic that the communist insurgency can be resolved within the next six to 10 years," Cruz said in a speech at a defense ministers' meeting in Singapore. (See photo on Page A2.)

The communist New People's Army has been waging a rebellion for more than three decades.

Cruz said success in prosecuting by defeating the group depended on sustaining economic growth and increasing spending on social services and security.

"Our experience has shown that insurgents and terrorists often take advantage of people to improve their communities to conflict areas in recruit adherents, gain support or secure safe havens," he said.

"These provide insurgents and terrorists opportunities they are quick to exploit," Cruz said. "This is the vicious cycle we aim to stop once and for all."

The Philippine economy grew by a strong 5.5 percent last year, allowing improvements in the armed forces and equipment purchases to enhance their mobility, firepower and communications, Cruz said.

Already the NPA's manpower has fallen by 15 percent a year since 2001, Cruz said. AP

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OPINION

Vol. 21 No. 177

Learning from outbursts

IT IS A CONTINUING MYSTERY: HOW CAN A professional politician with political credentials like the President—a bottomless capacity for campaigning, a track record that includes topping a Senate race, a work ethic even the opposition must acknowledge—commit amateurish political mistakes? The much-talked-about outburst directed at acting Education Secretary Fe Hidalgo, for example. Surely President Macapagal-Arroyo must have known that official meetings open to the public are forms of political theater; the goal is not to enlighten or even educate the public, but to assure that action is being taken. Meetings like last Wednesday's, which discussed the government's preparations for the start of the new academic year, are essentially confidence-building measures.

EDITORIAL

But the President's public humiliation of the education official underscored the very public confidence the man trying to build, because it focused renewed attention on the issue of classroom shortage. Instead of being reassured that the Arroyo administration was doing all it can to meet the classroom problem, the public was left wondering whether the President was lying about both problem and solution.

The truth is, the country's educational system is straining under the combined weight of a fast-growing population and an inadequately funded bureaucracy. In fact, the DepEd assumes that public school enrolment grows at 3 percent a year—that is, faster than the annual rate of increase in our population. (Enrolment growth in public high schools is even faster, in part because economic realities have forced more middle-income families to withdraw their children from private schools and place them in the public school system.)

It bears repeating. Based on the President's own preferred classroom-to-student ratio of 1:50 per shift, Hidalgo gave the correct estimate. The public school system will suffer a shortage of 6,602 classrooms.

But that estimate is based on other estimates. The DepEd projects that 12.4 million students will enroll in grade school this year, and 5.5 million in high school. It is possible, therefore, that the classroom shortage is worse than projected—if, as is actually quite likely, more students are enrolled for the academic year that starts today.

But classroom shortage is not the only recurring scandal in education. The failure of the majority of grade school students to make it to high school, either because of academic deficiencies or financial considerations (despite the Constitution's promise of free education until high school), is a warning sign of the system's progressively ill health; unfortunately, the alarm went off many years ago, and today almost nobody minds it. It is simply part of the noise in the background.

And yet, despite millions of fewer students in high school, the classroom shortage is worse at the secondary stage. At the 1:50 ratio per shift, the country's public high schools lack some classrooms (3,778) than do public grade schools (3,164). With public high school enrolment growth estimated at a much higher 5 percent, the President's emphasis on double-shifting only discovers the biggest problems. The (relative) few who make it to high school face worse odds.

This is a problem that transcends partisan political tensions, or indeed the limits of politics itself. The private sector is a vital part of the solution; many NGOs have helped build new classrooms, for example, and private schools have welcomed the DepEd's constricting scheme (where public school students are awarded a P4,800-a-year subsidy that allows them to study in private schools with available classroom space).

Unfortunately, the President's outburst does not inspire confidence among other possible stakeholders in education. It has drawn attention to the administration's tendency to politicize even the education sector. There's a lesson to be learned right there, for aspiring politicians as well as graduating seats.

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What's on his mind?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WITH SCHOOLS OPENING TODAY, THE TALK among groups of people is invariably the P10 million doomed to educational deficiency—left out in the cold by their pre-need company—by former congressman, former senator and now third-termer Agusto Ulaminan Mac L. Jiminez. With the donation, the jilted placeholders can enroll their children for three years in school (once or semester). The gist of the discussions is the motive of Jiminez in giving away so much money for nothing. Jiminez himself has said he has no other motive but to help the parents, but people in the know in his constituency say he has other.

The majority opinion is that the former congressman—although he has denied it—plans to get back to politics, and P10 million is a good investment for the purpose of getting votes. People remember that he plans to reclaim his old seat in the House of Representatives or run for mayor of Manila, now that the position is up for grabs with the popular Lito Atienza declining his third term next year. If Mel does run for Manila mayor, he will not be heading into new (or just politicians). Manila's former mayor, Sen. Alfredo Lim, and former PNP chief, Sen. Panfilo Lacson. Plus whatever lifetime himself will muster to his successor.

Another don't-know-officially-and-quantitatively) hunting in the shadows is—believe it or not—Sen. Lito Lapid. The senator from Pampanga was reportedly so shocked by the drubbing reaction to his plan to travel the impossibly of Makati from the popular Jejomar Binay that he has since his rights as a senator. Lapid is said to have lost his taste for the Senate because he would not understand and speak English—for which he is derided. Originally he wanted the mayoralty of Quezon City where he has a residence. But Mayor Feliciano Belmonte has since settled and would be a tough one to crash. So he was persuaded—by you know who—to run in Makati whose mayor is a pain to the ass of the Malacañang occupant. Lapid was reportedly promised support from the latter's party.

Lapid has nothing to lose and everything to gain by running for mayor in any place where he is qualified to run. Like Senator Lim, if he loses in the election, he can go back to the Senate—with influence left of his genuine campaign funds.

But going back to Jiminez, he does appear to be a charmed operator. The same alone of his benefactor, the Mabul Inc. is now foundering, with the mistake MJ Bonnevalon, is one proud of that.

Well, this is a free country and everybody is free to dream. If MJ dreams of becoming mayor of Manila, let him. If Sharin Mangrad-Arroyo, who has allegedly accumulated more money crimes than Al, could run for president, and Erin could succeed the (president) although she lost, why couldn't MJ run for mayor of Manila? And if he doing so he will help the mandate of Gloria and in the fourth by pre-need company. By the way, what is the Arroyo administration doing to punish abusive and greedy pre-need companies?), so much the better.

Our motto should still be: Don't knock if it can't you've tried it.

* * *

Since Filipinos seem to be obsessed with landing in the Guinness Book of World Records—making the longest noises, the longest hunger strikes, etc., etc.—there should be no for the world's dowsest parties (anyone) I don't think no other country can beat ours in this score. Cases like decades in Basilan, allow-nuses the original litigants are already dead by the time court, especially those involving lands, are involved with families. The case of the housing project inside the La Mesa watershed—which is already 30 years old and still counting, as it continues to elude closure—is one of the most visited of these cases. Another more recent one is the case of Ramon Revilla against the Comelec bank. The case is still awaiting their resolution.

Before the weekend, a two-page advertisement of Bruce Fliptroupe appeared in the business. The ad announced that many recent decisions of the Court of Appeals affirming a lower court's decision declaring the closure of BF by the CB in 1985 as illegal, and ordering the payment of P18.8 billion in damages to BF. The Bangko banned up by Governor Gabby Ops, which replaced the CB, will satisfy file a motion for reconsideration and, if that is denied, will appeal to the Supreme Court. In the case will take many more years. In the case of the BF "victims" and their millions of depositors, this delayed justice is truly justice denied.

There is no doubt that the CB erred in closing BF and that the latter should be reimbursed for the horrendous damages it suffered because of the closure. (The Supreme Court ordered BF's reopening in 1994.) The question is: Who should pay for the damages?

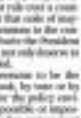
The Central Bank Board of Liquidators, (CB-BSL) which inherited the job of liquidating the CB's assets, has refused—has only a 25-some bile agents, said "Not us!" The new BSP said "Not us!" The BSP's position is that if has no obligation to settle BF's claims for damages as it is "not the successor-in-interest" of the CB. So BF instituted the BSP as a co-defendant complaint. The Regional Trial Court of Makati agreed with BF. The BSP appealed to the Court of Appeals. The CA affirmed the RTC decision.

The BSP, the CB said, is "indeed the successor-in-interest" of the CB and is bound by the decisions of the courts declaring the closure of BF illegal and done "with grave abuse of discretion," and that BF is entitled to the payment of damages.

"Over our dead body!"—the members of the Monetary Board are probably thinking. They will surely exhaust all legal means to avoid paying P18.8 billion. The management of BF knows this and, thus, has appealed the decision for a negotiated settlement before the case is finally resolved by the SC and appeal.

On the other hand, the MB members may simply actually choose to allow the case to end only "were their dead bodies."

Responsibility



THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IS GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO RESPONSIBLE for the killings of journalists and activists?

Yes.

Of course, Yolanda Ferrer, Ignacio Bunye, Raul Gonzalez and sundry police and military figures bristle at the thought of it, saying in one breath that their favorite boss has no knowledge about and certainly no consent to these killings; on the other, that she is in fact putting her foot down on these killings and that's why no one is ever charged. I myself have read and heard suggestions from so-called political analysts that the killings are not her doing, they are the doing of warlords, wayward generals and local officials who know they are getting away with it. It may be a clear sign that GMA is not in control of parts of her government, but it is also a clear sign that she is not responsible for the killings.

That is a load of bull. The suggestion about GMA getting sick and tired of the killings and has resolved to put an end to it is particularly rich. Every time a plague reaches pandemic proportions in this country, I hear Bunye say his boss has had enough of it and is resolved to put an end to it. That is so particularly when the international community took notice of spending corruption, deepening poverty and mounting crimes in this country. GMA, he said, would have no more of them and would get rid of them.

Well, corruption, poverty, human rights, poverty has gotten worse and dead journalists and activists have become more plentiful. The only things GMA has managed to get rid of, other than her enemies, are the right of the brainy to maintain government officials in hearings, the right of citizens to rally peacefully and the right of the voters to be ruled by someone they voted for. There she truly has put her foot down, refusing to allow her lieutenants to appear before the Senate and refusing to allow rallies at Mendiola notwithstanding that the Supreme Court has scrapped BP 880 and EPR.

Quite apart from this, isn't it completely idiotic to say you will squash the frogs only when they are already overrunning the place? The time for GMA to have put her foot down was when the first journalist or activist was killed, not later.

GMA is responsible for the killings in many ways. For the least of them is command responsibility. She like to order people to carry out their responsibilities, and she has been quite vocal in getting the fight against NPA Mendoza because you passed, you must be prepared to take responsibility for every bad thing that happens in it, including its being hit by all sorts of phrases like "collateral damage." The fact is, journalists and activists are not "collateral damage," they are an extraordinary evil. You cannot rule over a country and not be responsible for that code of murders. It adds whole new dimensions to the concept of command responsibility. You cannot say you have no control over the police, you not only do not believe it, you deserve to be jailed.

At the very least, you promise to be the President, by hook or by crook, by vote or by harm, you are responsible for the policy environment that makes things possible or impossible. GMA has produced a policy environment that makes the violation of human rights not just possible but inevitable, and she has produced a policy environment that makes democracy not just impossible but impossible. A policy environment does not just consist of the things you say, it also consists of the things you do. As in teaching, so in governing—examples is the best way to communicate.

Let me give you the example. Here is the fact that you will put your foot down on human rights violations, but you accept people without warrant and torture them while telling the world you do not have them in your custody, you will have written, or worse extremely, human rights violations. You can say all kingdom want that you will put your foot down on the killings, but you put medals on Brig. Gen. Jovito Palparan and made comments tantamount to suggesting that communists must disappear from the face of this earth, communists being everybody left of center, you are going to have activists massacred en masse. You can say till hell freezes over that you will protect journalists, but you damn well better not encourage them, intimidating them, harassing them and threatening to arrest them, you encourage their enemies to smash manhood on them.

Marcos was never expressly ordered the torture and murder of the Plebeyan Six during martial law. You will not find any order, suggestion, or hint, verbal or written, by him along those lines. Yet the Honolulu court, where the victims of torture and the kin of the "salvaged" and "disappeared" filed a class suit against him, found him guilty of those crimes and ruled that he indemnify the victims. Given the policy environment of martial law, he might as well have ordered an tablet an order to that effect. The same goes for GMA.

In the end, what makes GMA responsible for the killings today is the same thing that made Marcos responsible for the killings during martial law. That is, both of them are illegitimate rulers. Marcos stopped being legitimate when he became an unelected leader after May 1969. GMA stopped being a legitimate ruler when she became an unelected leader after May 2004. You are an illegitimate leader, you can rule only by force. You rule by force, you can only rule by violence. You become a dictator, you can only unleash the scourges of dictatorship, which are pillage, oppression and murder.

The New York Times editorial is wrong only in that it says GMA is closer to becoming a dictator today. The killings show she already is.

Is GMA responsible for the killings of journalists and activists?

Yes.

Amendment, revision, revolution

SUBSCRIBE TO THE INQUIRER CHANNEL

BY THE MARCOS CHARTER CHANGE IS BEING PUSHED to replace our presidential system with a parliamentary system. I have the feeling that we are going in one of the directions described by Justice Antonio in his separate opinion in the "1973 Ratification Cases." Quoting Jacobs Mason Fuller, Justice Antonio said: "A written constitution is susceptible of change in two ways: by revolution, which implies action not pursuant to any provision of the constitution itself, and by revision, which implies action pursuant to some prescribed provision in the constitution."

What happened in 1973 was not a constitutional revision but a revolution. It will be recalled that President Marcos, by Presidential Decree No. 73, scheduled the plebiscite on the work of the 1971 Constitutional Convention for Jan. 15, 1973. Later, however, by General Order No. 20, he postponed the plebiscite indefinitely. Meanwhile, Marcos organized the Citizens Assemblies which were asked "Do you approve of the New Constitution?" Then suddenly on Jan. 17, 1973, while the Supreme Court was hearing arguments on the petitions to enjoin the holding of a plebiscite during the charged atmosphere of martial law, Marcos issued Presidential Proclamation 1102 announcing that the new Constitution had been ratified by an overwhelming vote of the members of the Citizens Assemblies.

Many would not and would not believe the news. Some asked the Supreme Court to say that it was not so. But on March 31, 1973, a badly splintered Supreme Court declared "there is no further judicial obstacle to the new Constitution being considered in force and effect."

Thirteen years later, in February 1986, the 1973 Constitution came to an end the way it began: It was also overthrown by a revolution. Provisional Junior, however, unlike President Marcos in 1972, did not pretend that she was introducing a new constitution following the manner of revision prescribed by the 1973 Constitution. She simply ignored the 1973 Constitution and installed a Provisional Constitution which provided for a Constitutional Commission to draft a new constitution. This was how the 1987 Constitution.

President Marcos called the birth of the 1973 Constitution a revolution from within. We called the Provisional Constitution and eventually the 1987 Constitution as products of People Power revolution, a revolution from without.

Comparing the two processes, we can see that the 1973 revolution was initiated by the forces of government, whereas the 1986 revolution was initiated by forces outside the government, which eventually won the support of the Armed Forces.

President Marcos pretended to ground the 1973 process on the 1935 Constitution, claiming ratification by the people, whereas President Aquino openly declared her rejection of the process dictated by the 1973 Constitution while embracing sovereign people's power.

The action taken by President Marcos received the grudging support of an isolated Supreme Court which could only exclaim in surrender: "There is no further judicial obstacle to the new Constitution being considered in force and effect." The first President Aquino recognized that the Supreme Court whose blessing on the new regime she obtained.

What can we say about the current initiative to change the Constitution? What is it modeled after? After Marcos' revolution from within or after Aquino's people power revolution?

Under the current Cha cha initiative debate, not only the rule of the 1987 Constitution but also the 1987 Supreme Court decision prescribing Charter change by initiative and referendum. In that sense, it is a revolution. And like the 1972 revolution from within, it has the appearances of coming from within government and the people have no role in the Cha cha initiative. Moreover, the signature campaigns being orchestrated by local governments has all the earmarks of the Citizens Assemblies of 1972. It does not have the spontaneity of the Edsa revolt and neither does it have the honest expression of the national will that was manifested in the 1986 revolt. Can the current "initiative-revolution" succeed?

Revolutions, whether peaceful or bloody gain legitimacy only when they vote permanent hold of government. With means, they move from being merely de facto to being de jure. Looking back at the 1972 and 1986 revolutions, we must ask, what gave them that hold or semblance of legitimacy and validity?

I see at least two important factors that prop up a revolution. First is the support of the military. President Marcos was already supported by the military first when the military declared in 1969 and then by support behind President Aquino, when Marcos regime ended and the Aquino presidency began.

The second factor is the position taken by the Supreme Court. In 1972, the Supreme Court was initiated and it settled for being "the least dangerous branch," the usual description given to it. The Court practically remained "the least dangerous" during Marcos' rule. Since 1986, a reorganized Supreme Court has struggled to rebuild its reputation. Recently, it demonstrated it can flex judicial muscles.

All eyes at the moment are fixed on the military and on the Supreme Court. They can determine how the current initiative-revolution will fare.

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

Playing with shortage

THE OUTBURST OF THE PRESIDENT OVER THE "APPOINTedly "wrong" data on classroom shortage before a decision-making process that is misguided.

There is a serious shortage of classrooms nationwide, and no amount of economic, mathematical or whatever form of statistical exercise makes it disappear.

For planning purposes, 45 students per class is the ideal ratio adopted by the Department of Education. Note that the ratio is not maximum ratio, but classroom. A "class" refers to the body of students that learn together. (In Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, the norm is 25-30 per class.) What has happened over the past few years is that our class sizes have ballooned to 65 students or more in private schools cases, and classes reach up to 80 students...this to the result of high population growth coupled with the large number of private school students moving to public schools due to rising tuition fees that are now beyond the means of an increasing number of parents.

To deal with overcrowding, the DepEd introduced in an interim strategy (under Secretary Edilberto de Jesus)—"double shifting" in overcrowded schools so that classrooms could be used twice in a day by two classes—one in the morning and one in the afternoon—rather than by just one class for the entire day). Thus, the "classroom to student" ratio would be halved, in theory, to about 1:40 or 1:45.

However, the truth is, a classroom should only be used by one class per day because double- or triple-shifting takes valuable class time away from students. And the shorter the time for learning, the lower the achievement rates in subjects.

Double-shifting is, therefore, just a temporary solution. The real solution should be to build enough classrooms to provide alternative forms of education to deal with a public school enrollment that is growing at around 2 percent per annum at the elementary level and 5-7 percent at the high school level.

COMMENTARY

Juan Miguel Luz

That school year (2006-07), the DepEd expects to enroll 11.4 million elementary pupils and 5.5 million secondary students. At single-shift, there is a real shortage of 74,131 classrooms. At double-shift and 50 students per class (the President's preferred strategy), that shortage is 6,032, the figure Secretary Fe Hidalgo reported.

The shortage of 6,032 figure based on the DepEd data from which comes all 45,252 elementary and secondary schools. The numbers represent real shortages. And note that the smaller shortage achieved by double-shifting reflects an inverse learning proposition.

The solutions

There is no single solution to the problem of classroom shortage. The DepEd has proposed a two-pronged strategy (1) build more classrooms and (2) expand the SAGIPS (Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education) connecting scheme.

As to most private, P29 billion is needed to deal with the estimated shortage of 74,131 classrooms (at P400,000 per classroom). In a given year, the DepEd has P2 billion for school-building construction. At this rate, it would take more or 15 years to address the shortage, assuming zero growth in public school enrollment.

Under a double-shift scenario, the DepEd would need P2.7 billion a year to cover the "artificial" shortage of 6,032 classrooms.

On May 3, media reported the release by the Department of Budget and Management of P2 billion for classroom construction "in time for the start of the school year." A reliable, yes, "in time for the school year"? Hardly. It takes seven months (210 days) to bid, build and turn over a complete classroom (assuming the Department of Public Works and Highways is at its most efficient). Hence, signed classrooms to be delivered in January 2007 so the earliest.

And how is it that classroom construction funds were released in May when the 2006 budget has still to be passed in to law? Simple. There are actually classroom construction funds from the 2005 budget. The P2 billion is part of the national government's way of managing its fiscal deficit. But why not release the funds in January, during the dry season and six months before the start of the school year, rather than at the onset of the rainy season? This is a question the DepEd has been asking the DBM and Malacañang since 2002.

The second strategy is to expand GASTPE. Since the early 1990s, GASTPE has been paying private high schools an annual subsidy so that lower-income families could enroll their children in those schools. For the DepEd, GASTPE is a less-expensive alternative to building more classrooms and hiring more teachers (P12,000 for a year under GASTPE versus P625,000 to build a new classroom for 50 students, hire a new teacher, provide more furniture and books).

In SY 2005-2006, GASTPE paid P4,000 per student for 282,000 students from low-income families to study in 1,700 private high schools nationwide. The students come from families earning an annual income of less than P52,000 per year, and the program, which had a total budget of P1.3 billion in 2005, is being managed very efficiently by the fund for assistance to private education (FAPE). The plan has been to increase the number of grantees by an additional 50,000 students per year until the number settles at 775,000 students per year. Budget-wise, this is a simple matter of GASTPE versus P625,000 to build a new classroom for 50 students, hire a new teacher, provide more furniture and books).

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In a new twist, however, the administration is running the program into a "voucher" system and, in all likelihood, the distribution of the vouchers will be given to the LGUs (rather than to the education sector). With the school year opening this week, DepEd Secretary Fe Hidalgo said there will be "no additional slots for poor students so they can transfer from to new empty private schools. As is now usual, the program is being hijacked for political rather than educational ends.

Misguided priorities

The shortages in our education system are real. So the President's audience is having the DepEd to "rethink" to fix them. I have my doubts that DepEd will have different figures tomorrow—figures that should make the President happy.

That, of course, is the problem in our history of poor leaders: We don't face reality squarely (look at the shame in the last Sona as analyzed by a leading economist); we distort it (look at Marcos' use of the population growth projections); and we don't address it responsibly (look at this current classroom shortage issue). When reality is not in their liking, the government system now deliberates and "facts and figures."

Thus, the decision-making process becomes misguided and misleading. Worse, the bureaucracy is content into playing the game so is part.

Juan Miguel Luz is a former undersecretary of the Department of Education.

The secret identity of Ferdinand Marcos

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Nonalyn Montaño

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Lovable Secretary Gonzalez

LETTERS

JUST JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL Gonzalez simply lovelies! Without him, the Arroyo administration would be bland, less exciting.

Imagine him telling the Batasan 5-to-go back to the mountains "where they belong." I almost died laughing. He was inciting them to rebellion, for who is going to indict him? Presidential Chief of Staff Mike Defensor?

Lenity aside, whatever Gonzalez is interviewed in his office, the clutter on his desk isn't his (messy). How can I trust the efficiency of a government functionary whose work backlog almost keeps him out of sight? If his opening hand is as late as his mouth, we should surely be enjoying the sight of a more pleasing desk whenever he appears on television.

Gonzalez is undoubtedly a stitch. Banner belonging to the Cold War era of the '50s and the '60s. He sees communists, rebels and "destabilizers" everywhere sleep.

None of the lot, not even Satur Ocampo, really belongs in the mountains. Ka Satur's also an NDF spokesperson now confined to the jungle.

The battle in Metro Manila and other urban areas is for the hearts and minds of the people, but the people's war can not be won in the cities. The war in the urban areas is political, where the better ideas and better organizational prowess of Gonzalez should learn to accept fresh ideas and upgrade his desk first before he opens his mouth again. Otherwise, he will only fuse in the propaganda war.

—ARCHIMEDES S. SOMOZOZ,
4229 Int. A. Pascual St.,
Barrio Olympia, Baras, Rizal

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UP College of Medicine shows CHED's incompetence

RULE THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER Education has been asking private universities to freeze tuition for fifteen and impose additional fees. (They) impose new fees, CHED warns private schools," PDI, 5/23/06). It has miserably failed to prevent the country's premier state university, the University of the Philippines, particularly its College of Medicine, from increasing its fees. Starting this school year, pursuant to a decision of the UP Board of Regents (BOR), which is chaired by CHED, it is going to charge incoming freshmen a tuition fee of around P20,000 per semester. This is P8,000 higher than the tuition fee the college charged in previous years.

CHED's failure to effectively impose its own order on UP reveals its incompetence to act as a national regulating body for higher education institutions. The CHED has no basis for exempting UP from its freeze order, especially when the basis for the order is the economic crisis affecting every Filipino family, including the parents of our fabulous (g) boys.

Among the state universities and colleges (SUCs), it is UP that receives the biggest budget from the national government. This is not to say enough for the CHED to regulate UP's fee increases. Moreover, both CHED and UP were given an additional budget of P300 million each for 2006 by the Senate. ("Senate set to enact 'responsible, prudent' budget—Villar," PDI, 3/28/06).

The tuition fee hike imposed by the UP College of Medicine will affect 260 students and, therefore, will generate at most P5.3 million, an amount that can be sufficiently sourced by the budget.

CHED should not allow this tuition fee increase to UP this coming academic year. It should review immediately the unilateral tuition fee program of UP and of SUCs.

Also regrettable in the recent BOR meeting was the absence of Rep. Edcel Lagman, House Committee on Higher Education. Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, himself a graduate of the UP College of Medicine, he failed to fight for the dreams of bright and underprivileged students who are aspiring to become doctors. His absence was a disservice to the country, which is already suffering from a shortage of physicians.

Medical (g) Bayan has that with the approved tuition fee increase in the College of Medicine, other colleges and units would follow suit. It does feel like we are scaling a rising mountain of rising fees (editorial cartoon, PDI, 5/30/06), with only the financially able reaching the top.

—CHRISTINE JOY M. VEGA,
tinchbee@yahoo.com

Philippines will always have enough nurses

IN REFERENCE TO THE INQUIRER EDITORIAL "Goodbye, dear nurses" (PDI, 5/20/06), I strongly disagree that hospitals in our country will run out of nurses in the future. The fact is, thousands of Filipino finish nursing courses every year, to the point that hospitals—especially in the provinces where there are few and far between—can no longer accommodate many of them.

The solution to the problem is not to limit the export of nurses but to change the policies of hospitals regarding employment. There is such a thing as a "contract" signed between employer and employee. The agreement should be flexible to hospitals in terms of giving them time to train new nurses before them employ complete their contract. Many hospitals are just too lazy to hire and train new nurses. That is why they experience shortage of nurses. But there are only so many jobs that are created to serve as nurses but are out of job! And definitely many more of them are graduating in the coming years. Please check this out with the various schools of nursing all over the country.

Many parents are encouraging their sons and daughters to take up nursing. Why? Because it's the surest way to work abroad. Why abroad? Because there are no good job prospects in the Philippines; it's also the only decent way to get out of a difficult life in a country always in a political and economic crisis, in a country where the unemployment rate is continually rising.

I wonder why some people are against nurses going abroad to work. They should instead help the government address the more important problems facing our nation. They should know that nurses, especially those in the provinces, are not well compensated. The present pay of a nurse can't support a family nowadays. Unfortunately, most hospital owners in the Philippines are insensitive to the nurses' plight. So, the only way for a nurse to get out of the difficult situation is to go and earn money abroad. Hospitals abroad are more generous and they treat nurses better.

Filipinos will suffer more if skilled workers, like nurses are banned from working abroad. Besides, we are a democratic country. Each and every one of us has the right to a better life. Nurses have proven that their services abroad help not only their parents, sisters, brothers and relatives but also the Philippine economy in a big way. They are heroes. We should be proud of them.

It would not rather serve our country to be identified with domestic helpers and prostitutes? The fact is, Filipino nurses working abroad not only help our economy but also promote a better image of our country.

—JOSEPH REYES G. CORTEZ,
josephlaw0101@yan.com

Our past shows English is an effective medium

IN THE INQUIRER ISSUE OF APRIL 21, RAUL Sangalang wrote "English is cool, Pinoy English a 'kulang.'"

I would like to take exception to paragraph 7: "Today, we acknowledge that teaching the basic subjects to primary school children in a foreign language makes no sense. The child has enough problems with Math, and there we compound his problems by teaching it in a language he doesn't understand. The young mind can't learn many of their subjects in Filipino, and that is only true."

Sangalang also mentioned that he struggled with the sudden change in the first grade at the Lourdes School in Mandaluyong, because he didn't speak a word of English, having been brought up in a purely Tagalog-speaking home.

In my case, I enrolled in Grade 1 in Baguio, it also in June 1931 (not 1936 as I remember it) with Sangalang. Like him, I could not speak a word of English. The districts in our neighborhood were Ilocano and Ibaloi. At home, we conversed in Kapampangan because both my parents were Kapampangan. I talked with my friends in Ilocano and Ibaloi. All the subjects, starting with the first grade, were conducted in English.

Since the establishment of the educational system by the Americans in the early 1900s, English was the sole medium of instruction in all schools. Students, grade one and on, encounter any instrumentality problem in learning any subject, including Math, just because English was the medium of instruction. I, therefore, cannot understand why it is nonsensical to teach the basic subjects in primary school children in the vernacular.

Our textbooks, up to the mid-1950s, were far superior to those that were repeatedly revised and rewritten later. Our teachers were very good because they were products of the same system, and teacher education then was at its prime. The locals that they spent in school were devoted only to preaching and not "diluted" by private business or chatting among themselves. The school administrators were schooled in the true sense of the word and had a healthy respect for public funds. We spent no less than six hours in school and frequented the library, which was well-stocked with quality reading materials.

I fully understand and appreciate the need to schedule classes in shifts because of the shortage of classrooms and teachers. This problem can be mitigated, to some extent, by radically rewriting our textbooks, retaining teachers, allotting more funds for education, as repeatedly avowed by government authorities and leading educators.

If we all agree that English should be the sole medium of instruction in our schools—as we do it without any qualms, it has been done before—in my generation and in the generations ahead of us. Young Filipino students can learn all their subjects in English—the best lesson shown in the past.

—ANGELINO RAMOS,
#2 Wisdom St., Bonifacio City

Across the NATION

71 more arrest warrants for 18 farmers

LUCENA CITY—EIGHTEEN FARMERS IN THE BONDOC Peninsula in Quezon province are facing 71 more warrants from big landlords, according to the Philippine Ecumenical Action for Community Empowerment (Peace) Foundation, a nongovernment organization supporting the farmers.

Joanne Fernandez, Peace spokesperson, said the warrants of arrest were issued last week.

"Next we were informed that more arrest warrants against the farmers would be issued the following days. This coming week, a second batch of farmers would again surrender themselves before authorities in Rizalia," Fernandez said in an interview Sunday.

She said they had also received information that one of their community organizers was also arrested by the police.

"We're still getting all the details surrounding the arrest for the seven-pending legal orders. We strongly condemn the arrest," Fernandez said.

Fernandez lamented the staggering amount needed to secure the temporary liberty of the farmers. She said there were 29 cases filed against 171 farmers.

She lamented the fact that even if they were able to post bail for some of the arrested farmers, "they still could not be freed from the clutches of the municipal judge."

She blamed this on the municipal judge in San Francisco is an official board of canvassers, "Comelec."

She maintained that considering the cost to the farmers, landowners and the government, "it would be folly to play the landowners' game and engage them in all-cases they filed in the legal arena."

"The 29 farmers still standing warrants of arrest, the total bail fixed by the court amounts to P1.9 million," she said.

She added that one could only speculate on the amount of the bail needed.

"These do not take into account yet the cost of the services of lawyers and paralegals and other mentioned expenses," Fernandez added.

Fernandez pointed out that further to justice would be committed to the farmers if they would be sent to court at all.

"They should have been haled before an agrarian court and not to a criminal court," she argued.

She asked the Department of Justice to direct the provincial prosecutor of Quezon to prepare an inventory of cases filed against farmers of San Andres, San Francisco and San Narciso town.

Fernandez also asked the DOJ to form a panel to review all such cases now pending before the provincial prosecutor and order the dismissal of those that are clearly spurious in nature.

"It should also review the cases already filed with the RTCs (Regional Trial Courts) and move for the dismissal of cases that are spurious in character," she added.

To avoid a repetition, the DOJ should formulate guidelines on how prosecutors should treat cases with agrarian undertonings, Fernandez said.

On Wednesday, some 100 farmers belonging to the Alyansang Magbubukid ng Bondoc Peninsula, accompanied by their families, voluntarily surrendered to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) office in Camp Crame.

The farmers face 187 criminal cases ranging from qualified theft to estafa for harvesting filed against them by landowners.

Thirty-seven of the farmers had their arrest warrants with them, leaving the CIDG with no choice but to take them into custody.

The 37 are now detained in Camp Capinpin in San Pascual municipal jail in Quezon. —Joelle Mollet Jr., *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Roundup

20 hurt in wayward truck

Village guard die in attack

Fire destroys 13 houses

Soldier slain in ambush

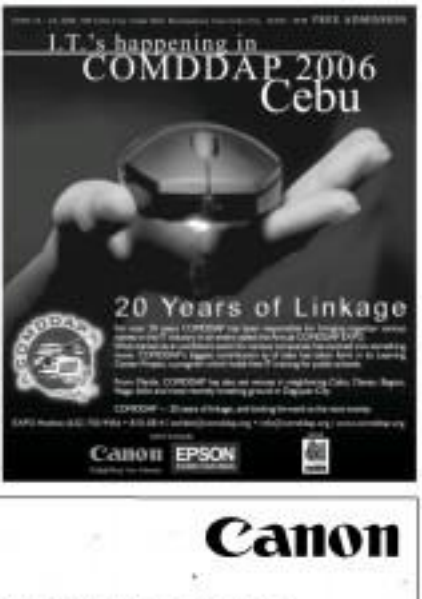
Boat, wife rescued

Spoiled food kills 3

Pinay maid family thankful

No foul play in recruit's death

Militiamen clash with MILF rebels; personal feud eyed



Canon

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QUIASON MAKALINTAL BAROT TORRES & IBARRA
Counsel for Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc.
21st Floor, Robinsons Equitable Tower
4 ADB Avenue corner Poveda Street, 1605 Ortigas Center, Pasig City

Geothermal exploration continues in S. Leyte

By Vicente S. Labiro
PDI Visayas Bureau

LEGAZPI, SOUTHERN LEYTE—THE GOVERNMENT is set to continue the geothermal fields exploration in Southern Leyte this year, which can be the answer to the growing need for power of the Visayas grid.

The geothermal exploration activity could provide job opportunities to the poor people of Southern Leyte, which in recent years had been hit by a series of disasters that displaced hundreds of families and claimed the lives of over 1,000 persons.

"I have no doubt that we will continue to develop the geothermal potentials in Southern Leyte," said Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla who was here with other energy officials on Friday to attend to the launching of a housing project for landslide victims from two of Libagon's villages. The housing project was sponsored mainly by the energy sector.

A GEOTHERMAL facility of the Philippine National Oil Corp. in Kidapawan City. Norte Celebrado.

Growth of demand

Lotilla said the growth of demand for power in the Visayas could provide a market for a geothermal plant in Southern Leyte.

He said the market was not Leyte itself but Cebu and the rest of the Visayas.

"It need not be the interconnection with Mindanao; manchester it eventually down the road, several poles from now, that might become possible, but right now just connecting it to the Cebu interconnection, to the rest of the Visayas, [would do] because it is where the demand is," Lotilla said.

"Cebuana's development will continue because you can consume that on Cebu or northward rather than to Mindanao. We don't have to spend as much and Transco [National Transmission Corp.] is working in that as well," he told the business, referring to Mr. Cebuana in San Juan town, the site of the geothermal exploration.

Noel Agatiza, president and chief executive officer of the Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC), said the Cebuana geothermal exploration project was set in the fourth quarter of this year.

"We'll bring all our rigs here [in Southern Leyte] for mobilization. Mobilization is in the fourth quarter," he told the business.

Entering the project implementation, he said, "we'll take one hole and ... we'll 'strike' another hole, and we'll make more work cover on a previous hole."

Aside from the exploration, he explained, is the cleaning of a hole. Once done, this will "give us a clear indication of how much is the power that's available for the area."

Agatiza said the exploration would cost them around P140 million including the work-over.

He added it would take them at least three months "to do all the geological studies" and by then, they could give an assurance as to how much megawatts were available in the geothermal area.

"So from there, the decision would be to buy detail taka [what] he the project would go on or not," he said.

The PNOC-EDC has shown interest in developing the Cebuana geothermal fields in the 1990s yet, but this was not pursued.

Big landslide

Agatiza said that because of the big landslide that hit Southern Leyte last February "the government has asked us to make it a priority project, at least for the exploration site so that there would be economic activity in the area."

Southern Leyte Gov. Roseller Lerias said she asked Lotilla to help them in asking President Macapagal-Arroyo to fast-track the project's implementation.

She said the project would not only generate jobs for the people of Southern Leyte "but in the long term, it would be able to improve the economic conditions of the province and the people."

In the meantime, Transco president and chief executive officer Alan Dela said his office was pushing the implementation of the Leyte-Mindanao interconnection project.

"We want to connect the whole network of transmission lines all over the country and the closest connection to Mindanao is through Southern Leyte, in particular Cabalian, because it still has a potential of 120 megawatts of geothermal power," he said.

If Leyte was connected to Mindanao, he said, there would be a unified grid and the power coming from Cebuana could be sold anywhere in the country, not only in Mindanao.

HUNDREDS of Palawan folk accompanied broadcaster Fernando "Dong" Batul to his last lap and demanded for justice for his killing.

Palawan radioman buried

By Jobelle Tesorio
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Joined by a crippled man and other supporters, Dong Batul, among the best-loved broadcasters in this city, made the 8-km distance from the Immaculate Conception Cathedral to the Puerto Princesa Memorial Park, grieving relatives, friends and supporters of Fernando "Dong" Batul brought the broadcaster to rest at about 1:30 p.m. on Saturday.

Most of them were white t-shirts with Batul's picture and the words "Justice for Dong" in front.

At the back was another slogan, "Any mail ay nilalabanan, ang buwis ay ipinaglalaban." Her comrade "Dong" Batul, pinatay ng: May 22, 2006.

The 2.5-km long funeral march started at about 10 a.m., after the 7:45 a.m. concelebrated Mass led by Bishop Pedro Arigo of the Apostolic Vicariate of Palawan and necrological services led by Palawan Governor Joel Reyes.

Arigo, who was a close friend of the slain broadcaster, had been celebrating Mass every evening for Batul.

Considered the biggest funeral march in the history of Palawan, longer than that of former House Speaker Ramon Mitra Jr., [redacted] from all walks of life did not mind the heat of the sun and hungry just to see Batul "ihatid-sa-huling-hantungan." Hill to his final resting place.

"I decided to walk eight kilometers because it is only once that I could join the funeral march of a hero," said Lolo Ben, 61, of Barangay Mandaragat here.

Jaisy Nipales, 66, of Bona, Palawan said, "I did not mind my hunger just to accompany Dong to his last moment."

Nipales left her home at the municipality at about 5 a.m. to be at Batul's funeral.

She said she only had her flashlight with her when the came down to catch up with the line going to Puerto Princesa, which took her two hours.

Friends and supporters united messages and photos that rallied for justice in their slain hero.

The multicab vehicle that he was driving when he was ambushed was pulled by a white Gabal at the front of the funeral march.

Unidentified gunmen killed Batul while on his way to work at 6:58 a.m. about 100 meters where the same happened, on May 22.

A suspect, PO1 Aaron Gubilan, has been arrested and a murder case has been filed against him.

The funeral march passed by Manalo St. where Batul was shot dead and, where young journalists paid tribute to him.

They said Batul's death would not be in vain because with his death, they said, somebody from their ranks would surely surface to continue the broadcaster's fight.

The funeral march also passed by the dyPR station before Batul was finally brought to rest at the Puerto Princesa City Memorial Park in Barangay San Jose.

At the memorial park, people were still coming even after Batul had already been laid to rest.

Flowers surrounded his grave while a large capability bearing his picture with a Philippine flag at the back was hoisted above it.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF CANCELLATION OF AWARD

[redacted]

Engr. [redacted]
Manager

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Republic of the Philippines

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS CABLES
PROJECT: [redacted]

[redacted]

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

[redacted]

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

INVITATION TO BID

[redacted]

108TH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Lack of support frustrates foundation

By Tonnie Ongo
PEI General Luzon Desk

ANGELES CITY—OFFICIALS OF A foundation organizing commemorative rites for the first and last anniversary of Independence Day here held by the abandoned first Philippine Republic said they were frustrated by the national government's lack of recognition of the event.

Despite invitations, no representatives from the executive, legislative or judicial departments had graced the remembrance of the June 12, 1898 rallyside at the Pedemtum mansion here once restructured, according to Ana Rosario, Dolor Foundation Inc. vice president and mission curator.

Perez said the events had restructured local occasions although the National Historical Institute cancelled centuries at the mansion in 2004.

The NHI recognized the mansion as the general headquarters of Filipino revolutionist forces led by Gen. Antonio Luna and the seat of the First Republic and a presidential palace.

It was President Emilio Aguinaldo who led the celebration of the first anniversary of the declaration of independence from Cavite, on June 12, 1898. Generals Gregorio del Pilar of Ilocos and Manuel Tinio of Nueva Ecija led the Army parade.

Proxy one of the survivors of the elitely European-style Pedemtum residence, Aguinaldo was said to have owned the original flag seen in Hong Kong and raised during the Kiram rites.

However, the event has not yet to be the last celebration because the republic started to crumble, leading to the eventual capture of Aguinaldo by Americans in Isabela on March 23, 1901.

Perez said Aguinaldo compiled the 1899 rites significant.

A copy of an English translation of his speech that day quoted Aguinaldo as describing the event as a commemoration of the "greatest event in our political history."

"It will the date on which the (Filipino) people, thirsting for liberty, justice and the exercise of their proper rights, thronged to Cavite, to carry out the highly cautious resolutions for the founding of a new era of progress and well-being for our idolized country, to the cry of 'the Philippines free and independent,'" said Aguinaldo.

"The Philippines is for the filipinos," he said.

Jaime protested the seat of the republic by putting up a defense line in the towns of Sta. Ana, Mapalacsiao, Malolos and Angeles.

There were varied by around by 25,000 soldiers with about 10,000 riflemen protecting Angeles in American-town captured Malolos in Bulacan and advanced toward San Fernando, Pampanga, according to a historical found Oct. 75.

The mansion served as headquarters of Gen. Arthur MacArthur until after the Filipino-American war in 1902.

"We are honored. Our national official have gotten to refine to this event when there are so much good about to historical importance and to think that President Macapagal-Arroyo hails from Pampanga. We don't know their reasons for not coming. The hope it's not because of indifference," Perez told the inquirer on Thursday.

"We're still receiving hope that they would come. Their presence is a testament that the (1899 event is just as important as the struggle for freedom," he said.

The mansion still needs extensive repair the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its former governor, Jaime Laya, awarded it from dilapidation to unrecognizable to the public.

In 1976, the BSP spent P25 million to buy the lot and restore the house, said Dizon.

The BSP sent the mansion to an office, leading it only to the foundation years June 12.

THE PARALLAX mansion in Angeles City. GALE ROSE

Wrong body of slain OFW arrives in Cebu

By Dennis Nagasdasan
PEI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—"IS THIS THE REAL body of my husband?"

This was the first question of Loreta Montevirgen after a casket containing the body of her husband Abel arrived at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday at the Mactan-Cebu International Airport.

The immediate family of Montevirgen was in shock Thursday after they discovered that the remains that a body supposedly that of Abel, which arrived on Wednesday night, was found to be that of another slain worker Rito Llorando of Tagaytay City.

Abel and Llorando were killed in the crossfire between security forces and suspected terrorists in Riyadh on Feb. 27. Three other Filipinos who were with Montevirgen and Llorando in the company vehicle that was shuttling them to the work place were injured.

Loreta said she was saddened that her family had to grieve for two months without seeing his body. She said they were relieved when they learned that it was arriving on Wednesday only to find out it was not his.

The caskets of Abel and Llorando were brought by Saudi Arabian Airlines on Wednesday noon at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. From there, they were brought separately to Aklan and Cebu in the evening.

The supposed body of Abel arrived at 6:45 p.m. on Wednesday but Loreta and the casket was first brought to St. Peter Funeral Homes in Cebu City to deliver his body. At that time, Loreta said, she could no longer distinguish the body because it was decomposing and the face was very dark.

She said she had some doubts because the body in the casket did not have a mustache and medium build unlike her husband.

The following morning, Loreta and Abel's recruitment agency informed her about the mistake in a telephone call.

She also received a call from the wife of Llorando telling her that the body was switched.

"I couldn't describe my emotions at that time," she recalled.

Loreta said she was not asking for an apology from whoever made the mistake, as they were not free when Abel's body had finally come home.

The wake will be held at the Montevirgen residence in Aklang, Danao City. His remains will be buried on June 11 to 12 (Cebu time).

Wilfredo Flores Jr., regional director of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, said personnel of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Riyadh could have made the mistake.

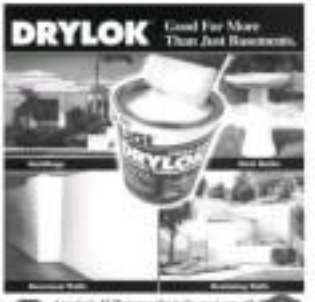
Montevirgen said the error could be traced to the mishandling of the coffins or the lack of body markings.

DFA spokesperson Jillbert Asuque, however, said the department could not be made liable because the shipping broker might have made the mistake.

She assured that the government had already reached the situation and made sure that the bodies were reunited with their rightful kin.

Abel came to Riyadh in June 2004. His contract would have ended this month. He had planned to come home for good in August.

His 33rd birthday was on Friday, Loreta said.



MGA DIABETIKO

Because the Power of 7 Herbs - synergistically blended to provide you with essential phytonutrients, antioxidants, & fiber. ABS Bitter Herbs helps you maintain healthy blood sugar levels naturally.

Mt. Pinatubo's sand funds youth education in Bacolor

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

BACOLOR, PAMPANGA—THE SAND THAT MT. Pinatubo spewed out in its 1991 eruptions and which buried this town after succeeding lahar flows is the same natural resource helping Aeta Atiba Hondo and 777 other students here fulfill their dreams of getting an education.

Like last school year, the local government's 5% million revenue from sand hauling return is again being spent this year for the college scholarship of Pinatubo's birth, Mayor Ramon Dungca said.

The municipal government charges a P30 "regulatory fee" for every truckload of sand hauled out from quarry sites along the Pasig Potrero river and in private land. Between 200 and 300 trucks go sand daily from the town, Dungca said.

He said earnings from the "white gold," as how sand is called in these parts, are used to pay the students' tuition and other fees, and monthly stipends of between P500 and P700.

At least 262 scholars are enrolled at the Don Honorio Ventura College of Arts and Trade (DHVCAT) and 140 at the San Vicente Pilot School for Philippine Craftsmen, both in this town. A total of 500 students are enrolled in various schools like the University of the Philippines, Holy Angel University and University of the Assumption.

They are enrolled in engineering, computer science, psychology, commerce, accountancy and education.

Like Hondo, who is on the dean's list in the University of the Assumption, many have received academic excellence awards as well.

Survivor

Hondo, 20, considers education her second lease on life.

Ten years ago, at dawn of Oct. 1, 1991, she escaped the destructive flood of lahar by running to her neighbor's two-story house in Barangay Cabetican.

Without food, water and any help coming, she stuck it out with about 140 residents trapped in that roof for almost three days until they decided to walk out of that isolation. Most were, they thought, would bring more lahar and clean the roof that has become their "island of life."

Residents and about 1,000 people, mostly children, were buried in a single surge of between 7 and 15 meters high of lahar that time.

Hondo said her parents took turns in carrying her on their backs as they walked out of the devastation, heading toward east in the direction of nearby City of San Fernando, by clinging to telephone cables.

"It's difficult to be coming to school. We were restricted in Talapayong (Mexico town) and how about (at P100 daily) rate up up allowance," the bespectacled Hondo said.

But to her surprise, her performance soared to fifth honor year and looks forward to landing a job at once.

Rebuilding

Dungca said the "sand for education" program, which the local government started in 2004 on a P1 million budget, was actually an approach at rebuilding the town from the disaster.

Only two landmarks in the town have survived the 1991 eruptions and 1995 Lahar onslaught—the 350-year-old San Guillermo Church and the DHVCAT, recognized as the oldest vocational school in Asia. Both structures are built bathed by lahar.

Most of the more than 67,000 residents at the time of the big lahar campaigns in 1995 had fled, many of whom still occupy in areas unattractive since to various Barangay towns.

As if that tragedy was not enough, Bacolor further lost 17 outlying villages when the national government built the PDI Republic and ripped the communities as each layers of lahar to the dike to serve the core of the province.

Lest, too, never was made of sugarcane fields, rice farms and fishponds that featured the grand culinary banquets that Bacolor was known for throwing at any time of the year.

"We have rebuilt but unlike slowly. The roads, bridges, churches, municipal (premises) are also the rehabilitation centers be limited to structures. People should come first," Dungca told the businesses to visit the scholars on Saturday.

"We thought that by helping the youth get an education, we are helping (re)create their dreams to see in life and their families as well. We are also building a pool of human resources that could help this town get back to its feet," he said.

Pioneers

Bacolor has produced many pioneers in the Philippine Catholic Church, hundreds of revolutionaries, five justices of the Supreme Court, seven legislators, seven governors, nine Cabinet members and four ambassadors.

It also prides itself of producing a long list of artists, educators, entrepreneurs, doctors, scientists, public servants, military officers and philanthropists, including Don Honorio Ventura who was the late President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's grandfather.

DHVCAT officials, teachers and other personnel solicited to share the school years that they or attach the town and town after the national government stopped giving the school fresh budgets due to threatened more lahar onslaught.

"If you succeed, don't just help yourself. Help others and help our town rise again," Dungca told the scholars.

Before Pinatubo's lands, nearly 100 students have obtained college degrees through the program. Some help out by teaching in the town, others by contributing expertise and labor in the local government's programs or their own communities.

Payback

Dungca said the educational scholarship did not have a payback system.

Without the said provision, the town's long tradition of putting a high regard on education would have been largely diminished, he said.

The town's internal revenue allotment (IRA) was reduced from P39 million to P20 million because of the sharp decrease in population, which was one of the bases of the IRA share.

That amount, Dungca said, "just was not enough to provide the social services needed by the growing population of Bacolor, now at almost 100,000 in the town/municipal.

Because tax opportunities remained limited to only about 5,000 families have remained in arable economically-active low economic base to do business. Dungca said the municipal government could only rely on its good fortune of having a bountiful supply of sand needed in the construction industry.

On top of usual usual revenues, the town also gets about P2 million in annual shares from the provincial government's quarry revenues.

What supplemental income the local government gets from sand quarrying is spent on maintaining the elementary schools in four remote villages and in paying the salaries of some 16 elementary and high school teachers in the town/municipal.

MAHALAGA
ang Manggagawang Pilipino!

The Philippines enjoys one of the highest minimum wages in Asia.

COUNTRY/CITY	DAILY MINIMUM WAGE (country currency)	DAILY MINIMUM WAGE (IN US $)
Vietnam	20,866.67 Dong	1.26
China/Beijing	28 Yuan	3.49
Indonesia/Jakarta	14,109.33 Rupiah	1.61
Thailand/Bangkok	171 Baht	4.04
Philippines/Metro Manila	**325 Pesos**	**6.26**
Malaysia	48.10 Ringgit	12.66
South Korea	22,720 Won	23.71
Singapore	71.33 Singapore Dollar	46.44

Labor Highlights

- ✓ Annual increases in daily minimum wage, except in SARS year 2003, from Php89 in 1989 to Php325 in 2005 with the Philippines having one of the highest minimum wages in Asia; higher than Thailand, Indonesia, China and Vietnam.
- ✓ Php46 Billion in non-wage benefits announced on May 1, 2006. Among these are: Php12 Billion for the condonation of SSS/GSIS salary and housing loan penalties; about Php7 Billion tax breaks in the form of withholding tax exemptions for minimum wage earners; and Php680 Million TESDA Business Process Outsourcing scholarships among others.
- ✓ Proactive conciliation and mediation program resulting in the lowest number of strikes in recent history and targeting zero strikes by 2010.
- ✓ Well-managed labor migration with the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) ensuring legal recruitment and placement, and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) providing benefits and assistance, like the recent safe repatriation of workers from East Timor and Filipino prisoners from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

"Let us dream together. Let's be among the countries of the First World in 20 years" President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Department of Labor and Employment

Tutorial schools thriving businesses in Baguio

BRAND= RECYCLED

A man shows his son how to use sacks to create an improvised raincoat. He collects used packaging materials to be sold to recycling shops for livelihood.

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—QUEUE FOR HIS selfmore to special centers here were silent at long as lines for tuitionmore schools this school term.

According to some teachers, this phenomenon suggests that parents will keep their children in school as of now, even if that means not paying their tuition.

The demand for tutors is fueled largely by the dismissive students' performances in math, science and language, said Gloria Leal, who administers the 13-year-old Teachers Training Center for the Progress Dept) Center.

But the tutoring business also counts on parents who want their children to remain in top form throughout their school days up to college, while their parents work, Leal said.

While financial difficulty has forced some parents to negotiate the amount tutorial fee of P500 per hour vs P320 a session, Leal said only a few have dropped tutorial sessions entirely from the household expense list.

Ernesto Merlan Marco, head of the St. Louis University economics department, said the yearly tuition increase had not reduced enrollment.

He said enrollment records of most colleges and universities indicated that parents put unconscionably high value in education, despite rising tuition and fees, shortages in classrooms, and poor teaching quality.

Merlan said parents from other provinces had also realized that educational centers situated in urban areas surrounded by industrial hubs where job opportunities are available.

The city, for example, hosts the Baguio City Economic Zone, where top exporter Texas Instruments Philippines Inc. and several call centers are located.

Many of these industries pick out their choice workers from the pool that schools churn to them end up graduating each year, Merlan said.

But diplomas alone no longer attract this industries, which have raised standards for quality consciousness, she said.

This may account for the increase in language tutorial schools that tutor grade school pupils and adults to proper conversational English, Merlan said.

Leal said she tapped fellow Baguio to become tutors of the Caribbean Training Center in 1993, when the business was just sprouting in Manila.

She said independent tutors became necessary because teachers were forbidden by employers to moonlight as tutors of their own students.

The business boomed between 1997 and 2002, Leal said, when tutors became "social cultural" for underachieving students.

She said tutors counsel children who could not cope with classroom lessons by providing special sessions.

"Our curriculum is not contrary to what is taught in school. We are not competitive although we also undercake refresher courses like the ordinary teacher to match the latest world education standards," Leal said.

The economists which summed the growth of many tutorial centers here, although it did not stop others from operating.

Sanctions urged on parents who can't raise kids well

"IF THEY CANNOT RAISE THEIR children well, put them behind bars."

A professor of the University of the Philippines Population Institute in Diliman made this statement while pushing to congressmen to pass a bill imposing sanctions on parents who cannot provide for the needs and rights of their children.

"Especially children's rights are violated to have good life and better future, if their parents could not give them to them and end up as the country's problems when they grow up, their let's compare sanctions," Dr. Zelda Zablan, chair of the Reproductive Health Advocacy Network of the UP institute, told the Inquirer.

She reiterated that the country's population growth rate had increased "on the uptrend" and not even some close to the administration target of 1.94 percent.

Zablan's group is calling for increased use of contraceptive materials, such as condoms, pills and intrauterine devices, and tubal ligation and vasectomy.

The Catholic Church is opposing the bill because it suggests access to artificial birth control methods.

But Zablan said: "If they don't like to prevent pregnancy, it will only lead to abortions. It is [the] right of every child to be born and given a responsible life. Unwanted pregnancy will only lead to abortion."

Benita Ditmon, a community development specialist of a World Bank-funded project in Central Mindanao, supported Zablan's appeal.

"It's better to prevent pregnancy than end up in abortion," Ditmon said.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles told Zablan's group that deliberation of House Bill 4113 would be fast-tracked.

"It's controversial. We [will] see to it that it will be balanced. We want to discuss it publicly so that the people can vote diligently," he said.

Nograles said HB 4113 was included in the calendar of sessions but he could not give assurance that the legislature would finish discussing the matter.

"I am in favor of the bill. In the Philippines, we have a tendency of fatless. But it's a matter [of] passing bills. If you have no numbers, you lose. I urge those lobbying for the bill to convince their respective congressmen to vote for the bill," he said. —Jeoffrey Abelson, PDI Mindanao Bureaus

15 private high schools in E. Visayas raise tuition

By Jerry A. Gubaina
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—THE DEPARTment of Education in Eastern Visayas has approved the application of 15 private high schools in the region to increase tuition from five to 10 percent this school year.

With the new round of increases, educators officials are blaming for an exodus of students from private schools to government-run high schools.

Brenda Lerog, chief of the secondary education division of Dep[Ed], said the approved increases in tuition were below the ceiling imposed by the department.

Under DepEd Order No. 20, series of 1994, any increase asked by the schools must not exceed 10 percent. Lerog said that of the 15 schools that would impose increases this school year, 11 are in Leyte, three in Southern Leyte, and one in Northern Samar.

Those in Leyte are the St. Theresa's Academy in Hilongos; St. Mary's Academy in Palo; Stone Dame of Antonio Jaro; Stone Dame of Abuyog and Abuyog academy, both in Abuyog; Holy Trinity College in Alangalang; St. Joseph's High School in Dagami; Holy School High School in Villaba; St. Joseph Academy of Leyte in Matalom; Holy Cross Academy in Carigara and Colegio de San Francisco in Javier.

Those in Southern Leyte are the Sts. Niño Academy in Maddlog; Clarine Bay Regional High School in St. Bernard, and the Libagon Academy Foundation in Libagon.

In Northern Samar, the St. Joseph Academy in San Jose town imposed a 10-percent tuition increase.

The DepEd rejected the application of the Eastern Samar Christian College in Hilongos, Leyte because it proposed a 21-percent increase but had no resolution of support from the Student Teachers Association.

Eastern Visayas has 374 public secondary schools.

DepEd assistant regional director Alberto Escobaro said he would not know yet how many the private schools would transfer from private to public schools this year but he believed the number would be high.

Last school year, 38,432 students enrolled in 118 private high schools in the region, while 242,998 students were enrolled in public high schools for 2005-06.

Teachers may be RP education's weak link

By Nikko Dizon

SO YOU THOUGHT YOU HAD "heroic" teachers in grade school who gave quizzes almost every day or "inspiring" ones who made you sing or draw the atoms leisurely for several minutes during class.

Think again. Such types of amateur may ironically represent one of the major weaknesses of the country's public education system.

Studies cited by the Department of Education have shown Filipino students generally doing poorly in Math and Science because, among other factors, they tend to spend too many hours—in term or semester simulated in the subject.

Unnecessary exams and tasks eat up precious time, according to Grace Antonio, the teacher tasked to spending on in-depth lessons, applications or problem-solving exercises that need not be graded, according to a former Baguio official.

Devoting less "time on task" is a damaging reflection of a teacher's competence, said former Education Undersecretary Jose Miguel Luz, quoting findings of the 1999 Trends in Math and Science Survey (TIMSS).

"If you are a teacher with little knowledge of what you're teaching, the first thing you tend to do at the start of class is tell your pupils to (Okay, take out a piece of paper and let's have a quiz.'

"This is because the quiz will probably take up to 20 minutes, the checking would take another 15, passing the paper and filling them, a few more. And before you know it, the teacher would be saying, 'Whew! I'm done for the day. Thank goodness,'" Luz said.

Time-wasting tests

Tests and quizzes are not always reliable indicators of a student's achievement but merely "time-wasting devices" for some teachers, he noted. "The best teachers are those who gobble the students' skills without having to grade them every day."

In the TIMSS findings, the Philippines was actually found to have the highest amount of instruction time devoted to Math in the world: at 193 hours a year compared with the 107 to 145 hours a year in the two performing countries.

But this edge goes to waste because "too much time (is spent) on other activities not related to content" and not enough time is set aside for problem-solving and instruction, Antonio said. Luz, who once taught Math in a private high school in Bacolod City.

He said this reminded him of what he had observed in the public school that stood next to his campus. "Every day, I could see from my room—Samson 'Saw the sun' (in class) after school) made the pupils sing or draw the atoms almost every hour. I thought, 'How could those kids really learn?'"

A World Bank study on education considered the role of teachers the "single most influential factor" behind a student's performance. Although other resources like books and school buildings affect performance, it is still teachers who have the biggest impact.

Consider that: An elementary school teacher in the country, with 18 years experience, is likely to have handled 1,200 to 2,400 students as a "homeroom" teacher or class adviser by the time he or she retires.

Disturbing scenario

But what happens when a teacher lacks a class despite being ill-trained to the very lessons he's supposed to impart? The DepEd said more than half of high school science teachers, for example, nowadays teach a disturbing scenario.

Of the total number who teach General Science, only 42 percent had majored in that subject; Biology teachers, only 44 percent; Chemistry, 33 percent, and Physics, 27 percent. The only encouraging circle is among Math teachers, of whom 69 percent are math majors.

Non-majors

Virtues, there is this joke in school faculties whenever there's are so few 'majors' to go around: if we had Physics teachers, maybe someone who majored in Physical Education would do," Lua said wryly.

A "non-major" being forced to teach subjects outside his specialization would usually "just pick up the textbook and report what's in the textbook. What kind of learning is that?" he said.

"The solution is to get teachers back to school"—preferably during summer so as not to affect their regular class schedules, said Luz, who during his DepEd tenure pushed for an allotment of at least "P1 billion per summer" in the agency's budget for this purpose.

That money, he said, could equip 50,000 teachers each summer to cover the areas first years with "minor" courses in Math, English and Science worth 18 units each.

Until such measures and other reforms take hold, a great number of Filipino students will likely continue to furnish anxiously, but wrong or survive one "surprise quiz" after another...and still miss out entirely on learning's real joys.

CLASSES resume along the corridor at the Geronimo Santiago School in Manila in this file photo.

Learning test scores below world average

From page A1

levels of learning that will help our children become productive adults," says former Education Undersecretary Jose Miguel Luz.

"We, as a country, cannot allow this to continue if we are to build a foundation for development, growth and equity to deal with our many problems that range from eradicating poverty to being internationally competitive," Luz says.

It will take the Philippines 11 to 13 years to narrow the gap with the world average in achievement tests and 20 to 28 years to reach the Singapore level, says the DepEd in a presentation to the Cabinet in July 2005.

Few land ICT jobs

Only 1.7 percent of college graduates application and jobs in ICT or information communications technology land they still require three months of in-house training before they become fully productive, according to industry surveys cited by the DepEd.

The health department says only 54 percent of practicing doctors in the Visayas passed competency tests. It says 56 percent would correctly advise a patient, 41 percent would administer the correct drugs, and 45 percent would correctly administer oxygen to respiratory cases.

Poor reading skills in English account for the dismal performances of students in Math and Science. A majority of Science teachers and a significant percentage of those handling Math are not math or Science majors.

Moreover, Filipino teachers do little supervised student teaching or practicum in education before the licensing or probationary teaching period, unlike their counterparts in best-performing countries. This is according to the TIMSS tests conducted in 1999 and 2003.

Average scores in Math and Science

Eight grade students in selected countries (1999 and 2003)

Country	Math 1999	Math 2003	Science 1999	Science 2003
Singapore	604	605	568	578
Korea	587	589	549	558
Hong Kong	582	586	530	556
Japan	579	570	550	552
Malaysia	519	508	492	510
United States	502	504	515	527
Indonesia	403	411	435	420
Philippines	345	378	345	377
International Average	487	466	488	473

Source: Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)

Compiled by Doreen Yang, INQUIRER

Investment needed

To improve the scores, investment is needed.

The DepEd says a regular public high school where P4,000 is spent for each student, the passing rate for Grade 4 students of the Philippines College Admission Tests) is 20 percent.

In a science-oriented high school where P17,000 is spent per student, the (post passing rate is 43 percent. Spending for each student in the Philippine Science High School is P68,800. Its 12-year passing rate is 80 percent.

Education began gaining priority status in the Philippine scheme of things after the Edsa "People Power" uprising that ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986.

It now has the biggest share of the national budget as mandated by the 1987 Constitution.

In the Appropriations Act of 2006, which last year to be approved, the allocations is P182.6 billion.

But even that will not be enough to deal with problems besetting the education system. There are some 28 million elementary and high school students in attendance. Classes 4 million of them are in private schools; the rest are in public schools.

As in previous years, 85 percent of that money will go to teachers.

There's not enough money for operational needs in (2,000 barangays to allow "universal access" to education.

Before the DepEd came into the Philippines several years ago, many households transferred their children from private to public schools.

Filipinos adequate financing, the basic material state objectives to "make citizens cope with the demands of development...their own and those of the nation's—cannot be adequately met.

Former Education Secretary Florencio Abad says the annual budget allocation for the department remains unreasonable relative to the problem.

"If you speak of what the system needs to improve competitiveness, improve achievement, to push for a dramatic improvement in teaching competencies, it's very little," Abad says.

Budget share small

The DepEd says its share of the budget is actually 12 percent.

Abad says it should be 20 percent.

Germano, which basically has the same number of students as the Philippines, is increasing education's share of its budget to 22 percent next year, says Abad. It is fielding about a million students for the same number of teachers as the Philippines.

Here, teachers number only half of what Germany has.

It is not a question of money, Abad says. It is about setting priorities right. He points to the P200-billion-a-year food incentives program.

"We are giving up revenues for incentives to all sorts of businesses that, I think, most anyway don't need," he says. "If you want to go into business, you go into business. Why do you have to give business with the government holding your hand?" he says, laughing.

LGUs get huge share

In fact, Abad says, local governments, until get the lion's share of the budget through its portion of the property tax and the internal revenue allocation. "There's a lot of money there," he says.

Outside of the national budget, capital could come from the private sector.

The concept of the "Adopt-a-School" program initiated by former Secretary Edilberto de Jesus, an incentives yielded P206 million from October 2002 to August 2004. The money was used anywhere from building classrooms to financing feeding programs.

The Special Education Fund derived from 1 percent of the real property taxes collected by local school boards has an untapped potential of $4 billion. It has earlier managed P7 billion annually.

The DepEd has enlisted assistance from the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, among many other organizations, to construct and rehabilitate classrooms and to donate books, or trade desks, and only a tiny fraction of the population has computers. Alexis Romero

Private sector assistance in public education

FEDERATION OF FILIPINO-CHINESE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, INC. (FFCCCII)

- 1998 to 2005: 3,000 new classrooms built
- 2003: 40 teachers and more for private schools supported in Tarlac area

ABS-CBN FOUNDATION, INC. (ACF)

- 2004: Project GALAS, aims to construct 1,500 quality high school classrooms by the Internet
- 2005: Send Back!, enables the teacher to provide college scholarships to deserving students

FILIPINO CHINESE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC. (FCYDF)

- 2004: Conducted workshops on "Mentoring for Teachers" program for Mindanao teachers' skills in preparing school plans
- 1998: "Social Mobilization Strategy" program to improve quality
- Assists and facilitates educational improvement in the school community

Compiled by Doreen Yang, INQUIRER

Malacañang won't cross DepEd Bridge

By Volt Contreras

ITS PROPONENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT of Education had hailed it as the "bridge" that would, in the long term, repair the country's public school system to finally catch up with the rest of the world.

In the last minute, however, Malacañang saw it more as a tightrope which President Macapagal-Arroyo would not afford to walk, especially after the controversial presidential election of May 2004.

In the end, the DepEd's Bridge Program—a scheme calling for remedial classes for the poorest performing fourth-year students before they would enter high school—was sacrificed and its scope drastically reduced in the name of political expediency.

This was according to former Education Undersecretary Jesus Mateo, who said he had a heated brainstorm with the administration when he resigned last April.

In a recent Inquirer interview, Luz disclosed how the fate of the Bridge Program was ultimately decided by "considerations" that education people had to "pertain political advocacy" of Ms Arroyo.

The program, he said, was ready for implementation during the opening of classes in June 2004.

The DepEd was saying to go, not only because the Pahiyas (fresh fruit) was in full support of the program but also because an earlier Social Weather Stations survey had shown that 78 percent of the people approved of such a measure, with only 20 percent against and 10 percent undecided.

Election casualty

"But then what happened? We had elections," he said. "And maybe after the elections, we will find no proclamation [of the winning President]."

Then Malacañang said, "Wait a minute, this (Bridge) might become a proclamation issue." Malacañang came to us and said as a group it," Luz said.

Certain political advisers were speechless with the 18 percent of respondents who were not in favor or were undecided, he said. "They said the President should worry about their because they were the ones who might rally against her during the proclamation stage."

Luz said the advisers assumed that the 30 percent were supporters of FPJ (the Ferdinando Poe Jr.) or, more accurately, Susanda Poe Jr.) who could turn it into an issue against the President.

Luz said then Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus was at the Cabinet meeting, held sometime in June 2004, where such "controversial" were raised about the Bridge Program.

Disappointment

After that meeting, De Jesus returned to DepEd, "called in officials and said: 'You weren't before what happened.' We were very disappointed."

Before his DepEd post, Luz was a professor at the Asian Institute of Management and headed its Center for Corporate Responsibility. He is now executive director of nongovernment organization for International Institute of Rural Reconstruction.

He is the older brother of Guillermo "Bill" Luz, executive director of the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference for Human Development, some of whose leaders last year called for Ms Arroyo to step down at the height of the "Hello Garci" scandal.

With the education department then led by De Jesus, "our mindset[s] seems to have the Bridge done, so it is entirely because voluntary," Luz said.

During its first run as an "optional" program, the program only managed to draw some 240,000 public elementary school students to take remedial courses in English, Science and Math.

A fraction of projection

The number was but a fraction of what the DepEd projected had Bridge remained a compulsory program. This was because up to 98 percent of the 1.1 million Grade 6 graduates that year had finished the High School Readiness Test (HSRT), which the DepEd administered in May 2004.

Those who failed the HSRT were supposed to take the program.

Luz said the scheme was designed to smoothly adjust the learners and "transition" the education public for the eventual addition of two more years to the basic education program—one year in kindergarten and another in high school.

"The long-term plan was, after five years of implementing Bridge, that period of remedial classes would be considered the freshman year of a five-year high school curriculum. At the grade school level, on the other hand, the government would require what is now considered preschool to become the new Grade 1 of the basic elementary package, hence adding one year and producing a Grade 7.

2 countries holding out

"There are only two countries left in the world that have 12 years of basic education—ours and Morocco in Africa," Luz sighed. "The rest of the world has been adding years."

"Are you telling me that we are so smart, that our children are that superior, that we no take up in 10 years what even developed countries strive to learn in 12 or more? If so, then why are we dropping poorly?" he said.

"Even Myanmar (Burma) has 11 and everybody else has 12 years. In Singapore if you want to go to college you have to spend 13 years [of basic education]. Ours."

The problem is not with any weakness in the Philippine curriculum, he maintained. "Ours is still basically the same as that of the rest of the world—US, Japan, developed countries."

Calculus

An example common to these curriculums is Calculus as a subject in the high school senior year. "But in other countries you already have spent 12 years before you get to Calculus. Here we think our children can already do it after 10 years. No way, no way," the former education undersecretary said.

Adding years of schooling to the basic curriculum enables students "to learn longer and deeply," Luz said.

"For what is happening with our 10-year cycle is that the child learns a little bit of this and a little of that, an introduction to this and an introduction to that. And there at the end of the day and they couldn't elaborate because they don't know enough," he said.

He recalled how the DepEd under De Jesus was roundly criticized, especially by some politicians, for being "arrogant" when the agency pushed for the additional years.

These critics brandished the additional expenses to be entailed by sending children to more years of "free tuition" in school, he said.

"Why would some people who believe their own children should get up to 14 years of basic education from prep upward now turn around and tell the public school kids that 10 years for them will do? What really bothers me is that we have a two-class education system," Luz said.

Congress adds P4B to budget of DepEd

Front page A1 of the Internet panel

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, chair of the House panel, said, "There's a consensus to put more money in education."

As the panels were reconciling their versions of the budget, Malacañang announced that there would be no tuition hike for state universities and colleges (SUCs) this school year.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya said the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) had released P365 million in contingency funds for all SUCs. Through the augmentation, the government will shoulder the burden of tuition increases.

Villar, chair of the Senate committee on finance, said increasing DepEd's budget in the range of P3.6 billion to P4.6 billion would create the shortage in classroom slots. But he said he was open to raising the amount to address the shortage in textbooks and textbooks.

"Whatever is needed, the Senate is willing to give, if we are going to solve one problem, we might as well solve all," he said, after emerging from the 45-minute, closed-door conference at the Philippine Coconut Authority building in Quezon City.

Meeting of minds

The bicameral conference added P32 billion for school buildings in DepEd's budget.

"I'm glad that the first bicam meeting is a meeting of the minds as far as improving the Department of Education is concerned—in a more comprehensive manner," Sen. Ralph Recto said.

The issue of classroom shortages came to the fore on Tuesday when President Macapagal-Arroyo wielded acting Education Secretary Jesli Lapus' admitting there was a backlog of 8,021 classrooms on a 45-1 pupil-classroom ratio.

A former Ms Arroyo convened Tuesday, pointing out that the administration had dealt with the shortage through the strategy of double shifting, in which classrooms are used twice a day, and the shortage is calculated on a 1:90:1 ratio.

At the bicameral conference committee, the House panel members, who approved a P1.049-billion budget, demanded that the outlay be restored in full to P1.353-billion, stating this was "the level of spending" needed to create growth.

Pork

But their counterparts in the Senate, who passed a leaner P1.027-billion budget on Thursday, vehemently "pork barrel" these old net yield and said they would study this following consultation with other senators.

"I would consider that a deadlock, but with some pressure," said Salceda, who also chairs the House committee on appropriations.

Both panels will meet again today and in the coming days, hoping that they could narrow the huge gaps in their versions and pass the long-delayed budget this week when Congress adjourns.

Full restoration

"The position of the House is full restoration," Salceda said, pointing out that a P1.021-billion budget was "the level of public spending on infrastructure that is necessary to create growth."

In the first quarter, the "biggest hammer" to the gross domestic product was the 19-percent increase in public spending on infrastructure, he said.

"Let's maintain that because that's the level of spending that is necessary to grow the economy by at least 6 percent this year," Salceda said, referring to the Malacañang proposed P1.053-trillion budget.

The senators, however, stuck by the P281 billion cut they made in the programmed funds, including the P3-billion Kilos Asenso Fund and P5.69-billion Kalayaan Barangay Program Fund, both viewed as pork barrel.

Paranoia

Rep. Eduardo Gullas of Pantaleon City described as "political paranoia" the opposition's claim that the President would use the funds for Charter change.

The Kilos Asenso Fund is intended to be the national government counterpart fund for local government projects, while the Kalayaan Fund is supposed to finance livelihood and infrastructure projects in areas facing insurgency.

"We didn't agree on the House position that

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DEFENDERS US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld (left) chats up Australian Defense Minister Brendan Nelson, Indian Defense Minister Pranab Mukherjee, New Zealand Defense Minister Phil Goff and Philippine Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz before the ministerial lunch during the Asia Security Summit in Singapore Saturday. [See story on Page 4/8] AFP/AFP

Erap tells US court he never got secret files

By Norman Bordadora

DISTRICT PRESIDENT JUDITH GUTMAN SAID denied receiving classified US government documents from a former Philippine National Police official and a former US intelligence analyst found guilty of spying in the United States.

In a deposition he sent to the lawyer of Michael Ray Aquino in the US, Estrada also said he neither solicited nor did he encourage either Aquino or Leandro Aragoncillo to illicitly get US government files to pass on to him.

"I never had an agreement with Leandro Aragoncillo, Michael Ray Aquino or anybody else to access classified US government documents in order to obtain information for myself or others or for any other purpose," Estrada said.

Aquino was a former PNP officer who fled to the US years ago to escape charges in the murder of public relations man Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and the latter's driver, Emmanuel Corbito.

Aragoncillo is a former US Marine who joined the Federal Bureau of Investigation as an intelligence analyst and worked at one point in the White House.

Guilty plea

He recently pleaded guilty to espionage for illegally obtaining classified information on Philippine leaders from White House computers and passing them on to Aquino, who in turn allegedly passed them on to Estrada and other personalities in the Philippines, including Sen. Nikki Lanzon and former Speaker Sefi Fuentebella.

Estrada sent the deposition last week to Mary Sherman, Aquino's lawyer.

Sherman is expected to present Estrada's deposition to the New Jersey court hearing the espionage case against Aquino when the trial resumes on June 13.

The American lawyer had been working to be allowed by the court to depose Aquino's alleged contacts in the Philippines. The proceedings are usually videotaped to be played back in the US court. Estrada, however, gave a written deposition.

In the paper he sent to Sherman, Estrada said he was "not inclined at the moment to travel to the United States in the case entitled United States v. Michael Ray Aquino."

No documents received

"I never received classified US Government documents or information from Leandro Aragoncillo and/or Michael Ray Aquino by e-mail, telephone or text message," Estrada said in the deposition dated May 25.

He said he didn't even know that Aquino or Aragoncillo had access to US government files and were willing to steal them.

"Michael Ray Aquino and/or Leandro Aragoncillo never told or even suggested that he/they were willing or able to access US government documents," Estrada said.

In previous statements to the local media, however, Estrada had said that there was nothing classified in the documents on the Philippine situation prepared by US authorities that he had seen.

"There was nothing new but (US Embassy reports in Washington) about our economy, peace and order, corruption, human rights violations. I read them all in our newspapers every day," Estrada was quoted as saying.

Estrada had told the Inquirer that he had shown the documents to people in the administration like Presidential Chief of Staff Mikhail Defensor and National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales.

"If those were classified, why would I show them?" Estrada had said.

Kalaw is new DAP president

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE DEVELOPMENT Academy of the Philippines, which provides education, training, research and consulting services to the government and other stakeholders, has announced the appointment of Antonio S. Kalaw Jr. as 7th DAP president.

He succeeds Eduardo T. Gonzalez who retired.

A graduate of the University of the Philippines where he also took up doctoral courses in public administration, Kalaw is a career executive service officer (Career) with more than 30 years experience in project management and development as well as local governance, revenue generation, human and logistical resource management.

He was through the ranks at DAP and is connected in the Palawan in Binalonan-Pozzorubbio, Tagaytay Bonifacio Tourism Council for Responsible Mining, Handog Ti Ilong Community Tagaytay Tourism Council, Tagaytay City Advisory Council, Presidential Task Force on the Relief and Rehabilitation of Baguio, Cavite Integrated Development Foundation, among other groups.

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Home schooling catches on in RP

By DJ Yap, Bayani San Diego Jr. and Rebecca C. Tandoc Jr.

PHOTO Contra

JOHN Poca

SHARON Cuneta

Celebrities, athletes, teen moms avail of alternative learning program

AS STUDENTS GO back to school this month, some of them will not be physically present in the classroom. Instead of the traditional school setting, they will be studying at home, usually in front of the computer. Their guide will not be a teacher, but modules which they can accomplish at their own pace.

Compared to the United States, home schooling is a relatively new phenomenon in the Philippines. There are no official figures on the number of home schoolers—the country although there are some schools and institutions that offer a Home Study Program.

One of these is the ABS-CBN Distance Learning Center (DLC) which is accredited by the Department of Education. For all intents and purposes, the center is a "regular high school with a curriculum one can find in any secondary learning institution," according to DLC director Ma. Cristina Gonzalez.

The difference lies in the methods, she said. Unlike most schools, teachers at the DLC adopt a specially flexible timetable for their students, rather than the other way around.

Commitment necessary

"We try to remove the drudgery and rigidity of schooling, but not altogether. There also has to be certain level of commitment on the part of the school and the student," Gonzalez said.

A few of the center's graduates include young stars Camille and John Prats, Carlo Aquino and Paula Cenon, to name a few.

Students at the center are divided into two programs: home school and semi-regular. The semi-regular program requires students to attend classes four times a week, while the home school program allows students to study at their own pace.

But the grading system and requirements such as exams and projects are the same for both, Gonzalez said.

The semi-regular program, under which most of the students are enrolled, is very similar to typical schools, in which classes are held from Tuesday to Friday between 9:30 a.m. and 6:15 p.m. at the Velasco Center building in the ABS-CBN compound.

The home school program, on the other hand, requires students to come to school only during the periodic orientation exams, to submit their projects or participate in special school activities.

Self-contained modules

They are provided with modules and worksheets that are "self-contained," meaning the students do not need special instructors to learn the lessons.

They are, however, encouraged to arrange consultations with their teachers if they are having trouble with certain subjects, said Don De Guzman, one of the teachers at the Center.

A one-on-one basis approach is used for home school students, depending on their needs or availability, he added.

"The good thing about DLC is that the teachers can focus their energies on each student one at a time. The lessons are also very advanced," said Jessi Ann, a 14-year-old home school student in her second year. She prefers home study to regular schooling be-

MORE, A24

IN THE KNOW

Home Schooling in the Philippines

The Home Study Program (also known as home schooling) is a curriculum offered to students who, for one reason or another, cannot be physically present in the classroom every day. Within the use of Self-Learning Modules, this program allows the home schooler to study at home at his own pace and time. As soon as they are ready, they may report to school for the checking of the accomplished modules and for examinations that are scheduled to validate the performances. Some of the schools that offer the program are:

Angelicum College Home Study Program
1119E J. Fabian St., Bagumbayan
Trunk line: (123) 745
Direct line: 413-8867

Colegio de San Juan de Letran Home Study Program
101 Manila Street, Intramuros, Manila
Trunk lines: 527-0000 to 10 loc. 30 (admission office)
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Whiz kid ready for school

At age 5, this incoming Grade II student can't wait for classes to begin

By Tina G. Santos

"DON'T call me a genius."

GOOD looks and an IQ of 140 to match. PHOTOS BY ALEXIS CRISOSTOMO

SUNDAY "JAY" MARCELLA JR., the 5-year-old who just flew from Florida, Detroit Meadows, is on a mission to go back to school that he wholeheartedly has chosen to start a week earlier.

However, classes at the Headstrong School for Gifted Learners, a private school in Quezon City that accommodates regular to gifted children with IQs ranging from 120 and above, won't begin until next Monday.

"Sometimes, I'm excited but some time I'm not my kin, I want it to be June 3," Ali, whose IQ (intelligence quotient) is 140, told the Inquirer.

An incoming Grade II student, Ali is the youngest among his classmates. Normally the grade level is reinforced of the second grade, about as long time a little more), grade there on (and he would have to Grade III," Mr.Mac Ali Marcella said.

Ali's mother Theresa, Executive Writing and Art director, his father added.

Ali's enthusiast, however, is marred by thoughts about his friends in Missouri.

"I miss all the kids," said. Sometimes, he even cries whenever he thinks of his friends back home. But by time, we learn Ali will get used to the new life here," said the boy's parents, who decided to return to the city after they found themselves, which they believe is the proper school for the intellectual level of their only child.

Dropout at age 4

Last year, the couple went to the Inquirer for help after Ali, then aged four, dropped out of Grade I after learning everything his teacher could have taught him.

It was confirmed by the University of the Philippines Department of Psychology confirmed that Ali was a gifted child.

Ali's mother, Hannah, however believes that this time, there will be able to cope in his new school "which seems to suit my demands the behavior of children like him."

He is also confident that Ali will not have any first-day jitters when he goes back to school next week.

"Unlike other kids who would cry and wouldn't let their parents leave them to school, Ali wouldn't tell us, 'Mommy Daddy, why don't you just stay outside? I can manage.' He's very behaved, he would just sit and read the writings on the board," she marveled.

Ready to learn more

Ali started reading and spelling by English at age 2. By began reading a year later. Still, he told the Inquirer that he hopes to learn "many new things in school."

While kids his age have yet to start counting from 1-10, Ali now knows the four mathematical operations.

"Before, he only knew addition and subtraction but he can now also solve multiplication and division problems," Marcella said.

Asked whether he had already prepared his school things, the boy who inherited his parents' good looks said: "Just a few things. Someone gave me a bag because I prayed."

Adrian Ali said that aside from the school bag, most of his son's school needs, including books and school uniform, came from generous benefactors.

Ali's mother Hannah, however believes that this time, there will be able to cope in his new school "which seems to suit my demands the behavior of children like him."

"I prayed to God to give me a good school, now I have a good school, Headstrong," said Ali.

Ali's father, in fact, said he considers everything that has been happening to his son as a "miracle."

"Without the help of God, without prayers, no miracle's for here. I believe this is all God's plan for Ali. I think it was really meant for him to study here in Manila," he said.

Since his son's story first came out in the Inquirer, they have been deluged with hundreds of text messages and letters from people either sharing words of encouragement or expressing a desire to help the wonder boy achieve his ambition.

"Some were thanking us, saying his story was a welcome break for a nation mired in political controversy since it came out at the height of the Hello-gate scandal," he said.

Generous people

Among those people who volunteered Ali and his family are Ina Mendiones, the owner of a mansion apartment in Teachers Village where the family is staying, and some members of the Balancing Elementary School alumni foundation led by Corazon Estacio and Jovie Bautista.

There was also an old lady from Quezon province who, upon hearing of Ali's kindergarten-minded inclinations, gave him an open.

"He is sensitive to sounds and always asks about them. He loves instruments but we can't buy him any," Marcella said.

The young boy spends most of his time reading books like the Bible or engaging adults in a conversation.

For a 5-year-old, he is aware of the things happening around him, including media killings.

"They job is very risky," he told his dad over breakfast just last Saturday. "Someone will kill them, but if they're not doing anything wrong, they should not be arrested. The media should be careful and truthful."

One time, he overheard his parents talking about Jesus having a wife in the controversial film "The Da Vinci Code."

Ali burned to, "I don't think so. How can Jesus possess if He has a family? How can He go to other planets?" Pilot will take care of Ali," he said.

Indeed, Ali is the wonder child every parent dreams of. But he doesn't want to be called one as he stressed that somebody up there is more knowledgeable than he is.

"I don't call me a genius. That is just a gift from God. 'Ali don't know everything, only God knows everything," he said.

Home schooling catches on in RP

Newspaper #23

since it affords her more freedom and more time to help out with her grandmother's business.

"We're given modules and we're really required to finish the worksheets on time. Although I have a lot of free time, I still feel the pressure to meet deadlines," she added.

The same is true even for the oldest two in the family, said Dr. Guzman.

For celebrities, too

There are about a dozen or so home schooling or home schooling. They are not all homegrown "Kapatiran" (child's home of them are "Kapatid," or actors working to their network GMA-7.

"The managers of some of the stars must not handle have been very cooperative. Some of them would give us a copy of their week's commitments and say would try to work around that," Dr. Balanzategui said.

"We do not discriminate—do not require all with requirements," he said. "But we're not in the business of recruiting. We understand that some of the students cannot be present all the time."

There's students cant hit and named, straight. 17 year-old who had to leave a private university because the school could not accommodate his long practice of dentist.

The boy has a genetically rabid neurosis. He is undergoing treatment for leukemia.

Established in 1998, the DLC was originally intended as an educational institution for young artists and actresses or other stars who want to pursue their schooling because of work, she said.

It started with only nine students, all but one belonging to the ABS-CBN talent pool. Comedian-cast Xiene Dizon, the DLC has expanded, making its presence felt as a distance-learning center for "artists" and "non-artists" alike. It has also been expanding its operations to accommodate regular students with special needs.

Guzmán said it was still too soon to offer college courses at the DLC, although she senses now considering offering two-year special or vocational courses.

Famous student

Another famous "Kapamilya" who will be going back to school this year is Margarita Fernan Gyarin who turned 46 in January.

Her teen, however, should not to expect to see her on campus since she will be studying online the comfort of her home.

"I felt I had wanted so much time," Fernan said in an interview published with Philippine college. "My husband Mike (Sen. Francis Pangilinan) has been encouraging me for the past 10 years because he saw how much I had enjoyed myself in Boston."

Gaviola was enrolled in Boston College's Graduate School of Business.

"Then it hit me that my oldest JC is already graduating and was (with a degree in International Communications with a focus on corporations and organizations) and a minor in theory and practice of leadership) and I was only after Boston, I could've had her degree by now," she said.

Gaviola, however, had to take into consideration her responsibilities as working wife and mother to daughters Natalie and Mel.

Online learning

"The point doing about the two-year Associate in arts program of the University of the Philippines Open University (OU) is that it is communicating with my instructors online. If I have questions, I can always e-mail them," she said.

Before going back to school, however, she had to overcome her initial fear of entrance examinations. "I had been away from school for a decade. Eventually a big part was really settling and embracement mind-shift."

Gaviola joined several and among the 30 students who took the entrance test.

More than anything else, the lawyer says that the IP-OU will further hone her sense of self-discipline. "We [as wives or our assignments at home, but [here at Ateneo] we're supposed to submit them on time. Professionally, you'll have to negotiate to take courses at the UP [Diliman] campus," she said.

After finishing the required units, Gaviola hopes to take up Executive Management Management.

For emphasized, "It's because ever since I was a child, I've always loved reading, writing, entertaining. Anything to do with the kitchen and the home."

Home schooling in Pasig

In Pasig City, some high school students at the Rizal Experimental Science and Pilot School for College Industries (RESPSCI) will probably just stay home today the first day of school.

These students are enrolled in the home study program called "Sulit Pamahay" which the public school is encouraging fellow high schools to offer in order but two schedules.

"It was conceptualized to answer the needs of those who cannot go to school regularly, but are interested to learn," school principal Jose Gonzales told the Inquirer.

Gonzales said the program was formulated by the national government to address the growing number of out-of-school youth in Pasig City.

RESPSCI has a regular high school program. Students will go to school everyday and study at least nine subjects during the school year.

But for those with special needs, the home-study program has been the solution.

Same curriculum

Students under the Sulit Pamahay also take nine academic subjects and follow the same high school curriculum the Department of Education has prescribed for public high schools.

But they will only report once or twice a month—not every day frequently depending on their availability—to get assignments, projects and lessons from their teachers for a specific time frame or even for the entire grading period.

They could do their school tasks in the comfort of their homes, or in study, or during evenings. The next time they go back to school is to submit the requirements.

To gauge how much they have learned—and to know if they really studied on their own—they will be given quizzes and periodical exams the moment they report back to their classroom, program coordinator Estelle Echiverri said.

There are four classrooms at the RESPSCI devoted to the home study program where teachers will report to. Student teachers and advisers will report to each everyday, ready for consultations should a student show up.

Toned-sector

RESPSCI, which also offers a regular high school program as well as vocational courses, takes pride in being the first to offer this alternative learning style, years before private institutions started offering home-study programs.

Being a public school, the program is free of charge. Gonzales also guarantees quality teaching although they will depend largely on the students themselves.

Still, Gonzales said the program had produced several students who passed the University of the Philippines College Admission Test, said to be one of the toughest entrance exams in the country.

But not everyone is qualified. Gonzales said those interested in enrolling should prove they cannot attend regular high schools because of their time of work, their poor health or because of security risks.

Take it from the program's first batch of graduates in 2005 which included Arian Jacint de Belen, Aga Muhlach and Lani Mercado.

They were followed by stars such as Jericho Rosales, Claudine and Angelica Jones, other students and ordinary ones who tutored have piled up all hours of research papers.

There were also national athletes who enrolled in the program because they would not go to school regularly because of intensive training.

Teen stories

But Gonzales was quick to add the home study program was also loaded by girls who had stopped schooling because of teenage pregnancy, those whose bodies had been weakened by chronic illnesses like asthma but whose passion for learning remained strong and those whose lives are under threat, like crime witnesses under police protection programs.

Of course, there is a vast difference still the discipline of going to school everyday. But they should be no comparison really, Gonzales said.

The alternative learning program is set out to displace the regular high school program.

But for those who would love to but cannot go to school everyday, the home study program is a perfect way for knowledge to reach out.

METROBRIEFS

Strict security measures

CAMP BGen Mayor Hermogenes ordered the implementation of laws to plan the security measures not only for the city's upcoming elections but to prevent or quell other local contingency like "Rizalito." He later "the toughest because there are the Gerald dangerous those fathers is true, we committed even into our daylight," Angeles said in a statement. The most wanting police units and in need with the "the added the Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Edmundo Ano "Since the upcoming, costing nearly P 90 million. Police have already identified four of the suspects, believed to be members of the Ampang Pisang Robbery Group. Caesar Police chief Supt. Gilbert Cruz said they are now looking for the gun operation's Mac Arthur Ferrer, Rebel Gonzalez, Dandito Cuenco and Alex Flores Soliz. The suspects were identified by witnesses through police line-ups.

Edwin C. Tandoc Jr.

Rookie cop killed

A RECKLESS policeman who sought victims with a stolen firearm exposure during victory party was the officer eight was gunned down by two masked Quezon City PNP Police Station was subsequently murdered on the residential lapse of Homicide Investigation at around 8 p.m. Saturday, when the suicidal, police said. Not wanting to get out, the 20-year-old policeman pushed his victim to the motorcycle in front of Hotel gasoline station, according to investigator PO2 Rodolfo Edwin. As Nebelos was driving, the suspect fired at the victim's head, killing him instantly. The suspect was later identified by witnesses through police line-ups.

Edwin C. Tandoc Jr.

Number-coding back

A LTFRB reminded to drivers, today under the no number-coding scheme. The LTFRB and the Police Department's (MMDA) after seven months' suspension due to the summer break. The MMDA's number-coding scheme restricts the operation of motorists with odd-numbered plates on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, while those with even-numbered plates on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The number-coding scheme is in effect from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays. Violators will be apprehended by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

Sara E. Simmons

Earth savers cited

BAMBOO Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales cautioned the Father Saul Gabo directed on environmental protection. The Archbishop of Manila-based Environmental Awards Action to the president of a Missionary organization in Cebu who is fighting to reduce Quarry Impact Administration Center 1 Columbus Foundation. The Father Saul Gabo received the award Talked Oh. Rizal Governing Boat Executive Secretaries. The Father Saul Gabo Award was set up by former San Fernando Bishop Archdiocese of Tuguegarao who worked for the protection of forests against erosion and mining.

Iran to weigh incentives package

But Ahmadinejad vows not to give up nuclear technology

AHMADINEJAD during rare commemorating Iran's late revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (background photo) June 3.

TEHRAN — PRESIDENT Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said on Saturday Iran would consider incentives from six world powers to persuade it to abandon plans to make nuclear fuel, but insisted the crux of the package was still unacceptable.

EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana will soon deliver the proposals agreed by the US, Russian, British, German, French and Chinese foreign ministers in Vienna on Thursday.

"We will not pass judgment on the proposals hastily," Ahmadinejad told a crowd in the south of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, spiritual father of the 1979 Islamic revolution, saying the package would receive due consideration.

"But using nuclear technology for production of nuclear fuel for peaceful purposes is part of our legal and certain rights and we will never negotiate on that with anybody," he added.

The West has demanded that Tehran give up uranium enrichment as proof that it is not developing nuclear weapons.

The incentives being offered by the six powers were still not known, but diplomats have been assisting on themes ranging from offering nuclear reactors to giving security guarantees.

No date has been announced for Solana to present the incentives to Iranian officials, but he plans to be in the Middle East on Sunday and Monday.

Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said on state television: "We believe if ... there's goodwill then there's a possibility that our ideas may complete the proposal and give them (Westerners) a say out of the situation they have created for themselves."

However, he added: "The main pillar of the talks is that they should be free from conditions."

Iranian politicians habitually use the word "preconditions" for demands that Iran end its fuel work. Mottaki and Ahmadinejad have said there is no question of this, insisting on a right to make fuel for power generation.

Ahmadinejad on Friday told US Secretary-General Kofi Annan that Iran was willing to negotiate on nuclear issues as long as talks had no "preconditions" of threats," state media reported.

Washington says this must not be seen as a final rejection, and that Iran could be making set a negotiating position.

Iran has a labor-intensive command structure and sometimes from the president and the foreign minister may not be the last word on political matters.

Iran's main authority is Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and the Supreme National Security Council, headed by chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani, is directly charged with handling the nuclear dispute.

Analysts see the proposals from the world powers and a new US offer to enter into direct talks with Iran as attempts to build a united diplomatic front for possible later action in the UN Security Council, which has the power to impose sanctions.

In a statement, the Vatican said on Saturday diplomacy was the only way to resolve the dispute over Iran's nuclear program.

"The Holy See is firmly convinced that over the present difficulties an end must be overcome through diplomatic contacts, using all the means diplomacy has at its disposal," it said. Reuters

Lunch talk shifted US stand

WASHINGTON — ON A TUESDAY afternoon two months ago, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice sat down for a small lunch in President Bush's private dining room behind the Oval Office and delivered grim news to her boss: Their coalition against Iran was at risk of falling apart.

A meeting she had attended in Berlin days earlier with European foreign ministers had been a disaster, she reported, according to participants in the discussion. Iran was surely exploiting divisions among the Europeans and Russia, and specifically with its main interest of members. Bush grimaced, one aide said, "with a look that said, 'Oh, wow, what is the answer?'"

That question troubled all a slowly laid out-month effort to reach a dramatically different strategy can to produce the containment that Iran sought in a private memo to Bush. It branded the idea that the United States and 25-year-old policy against negotiating directly with Iran.

Bush gradually grew more comfortable with allowing talks to resume. He committed the No. 3 man spokesman of secretary. He early misgivings about the path he was considering came in a flurry of phone calls to Cheney and to Stephen J. Hadley, the national security adviser that often began with questions like "What if the Iranians do this," posing one loud scenarios of possible situations.

Bush left open the option of scuttling the entire idea until early Wednesday morning, three senior officials said.

He made the final decision only after telephone calls with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia and the chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, in Him to conclude that if Tehran refused to suspend its enrichment of uranium, or later changed its firm, they would support an escalating series of sanctions against Iran at the UN that could lead to a confrontation. NYT

AND THE WINNER IS ... Mary Ann Luttrell, 4, cooks up after competing in the cherry pie-eating contest, June 3, at the Washington Cherry Festival in Washington, DC. This was Luttrell's first attempt at the contest and she came away a winner in her age group.

Suicide bomber kills 28 in Basra

BAGHDAD, IRAQ — A SUICIDE CAR BOMBER blew himself up in a crowded market in oil-rich southern Basra, killing 28 people and wounding 62. In Baghdad, a Iranian diplomat was killed and four diplomatic employees were kidnapped.

Around Iraq, at least 42 people were killed Saturday and dozens were wounded, and police discovered the remains of 13 people, including eight severed heads.

On Sunday, gunmen in a car opened fire on a minibus carrying telecommunications employees to work in an area near the Shiite slum of Sadr City, killing four and wounding two.

In Basra, Iraq's second-biggest city the suicide car bomb exploded Saturday afternoon when many people were shopping, police Capt. Ibrahim Kadhim said. The blast left pools of blood around the market square and set several vehicles on fire.

It wasn't known who staged the attack, but Basra has seen growing violence and unrest, leading Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki last week to declare a month-long state of emergency in the mainly Shiite city. AP

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The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Queaño

Bolivia's Morales starts 'land revolution'

MORALES

Leftist president to hand over a fifth of territory to poor farmers

SANTA CRUZ, BOLIVIA—BOLIVIA'S LEFTIST PRESIdent, Evo Morales, took a first step on Saturday toward handing over a fifth of the country's territory to poor farmers, a day after angry landowners vowed to form self-defense groups.

Morales chose the eastern city of Santa Cruz, the landowners' power base in Bolivia's agricultural heartland, to unveil 600 titles to 7.8 million acres (3.1 million hectares) of former government land to some of the poor peasants who support him.

"The historical mandate of the poor must accept the land revolution," Morales told at a ceremony in a square packed with thousands of indigenous people.

Morales, a coca farmer from a poor indigenous background, unsettled the land reform program on May 1, the same day he nationalized the oil industry in South America's poorest country.

Although Morales' oil nationalization plans have worried foreign investors and sealed fears in Washington of continuing a leftward, nationalist trend begun by Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, officials at home has not been widespread.

But his land reform plans have laid bare fault lines in a country where the Roman Catholic Church estimates a handful of families own 90 percent of all farmland, while 3 million indigenous peasant farmers share the rest.

Government pledges to redistribute only idle land and avoid massive seizures have failed to reassure landowners, and talks broke down between the government and landowners on Friday.

Jose Gispert, a leader of a farm group in eastern Santa Cruz, told local television late on Friday that landowners would form committees to defend properties in the region, home to vast cattle ranches and soy plantations.

"If the law of the land doesn't defend us, we have the right to seek defense mechanisms," Gispert said.

Gispert did not say whether the groups would be armed, and government officials said earlier this week they would not tolerate "delinquent groups."

Bolivia has seen only isolated invasions of farms by landless peasants in recent years.

At first, the government said it planned to hand over up to 12 million acres (5 million hectares) of state property to indigenous groups. It then planned to identify idle private farmland for possible later distribution. Reuters

Fighting among ethnic gangs erupts anew in Dili

DILI—FRESH FIGHTING ERUPTED among rival ethnic gangs in East Timor's capital Dili Sunday, as church leaders pleaded with factions to heed the calls that have threatened to push the country into all-out civil war.

The clashes occurred at the flash point Comoro bridge area of the city, where police moved in and seized firearms and tear gas canisters from rioters.

The bridge is a vital link between the city and the airport, where thousands of refugees have crowded to escape the violence.

The bridge, which has been closed several times in the past week when gangs of youths turned it into a battleground, remained open Sunday despite the violence as trucks carrying water made their way to the refugee camps.

Malaysian and Australian troops from the 2,200-strong international force deployed to quell unrest in the capital conducted door-to-door searches in the area where youths had set fire to homes and were throwing rocks at each other.

The troops moved in with armored personnel carriers and helicopter support in an attempt to end the clashes, in which at least one man was shot dead after being found with a pistol.

And while the troops' presence allowed fire fighters to work unimpeded, flames from torched houses easily leaped into the back alleys and continued burning and some arsonic minutes after the Australian-led forces had moved on.

Ambulance officers at the centre said there had been no injuries so far Sunday but the local hospital said six people were seriously hurt when fleeing hit by rocks in the same area on Saturday and another nine people on Friday.

The latest violence came as church leaders pleaded in Sunday sermons for peace in the Timorese capital, where more than 30 people have been killed in recent violence.

"We cannot respond to violence with violence," father Antero Mata said.

"We have to respond to violence with love and truth," he told the congregation at the St. Antonio Manuel church on Dili's waterfront, where refugees have camped out since last week seeking shelter. AFP

NEW ZEALAND troops perform a traditional Maori dance to welcome the Australian commander to their base in Dili June 4.

WORLDBRIEFS

Montenegro declares independence

PODGORICA, Montenegro—Montenegro's parliament proclaimed independence for the tiny Balkan republic Saturday, forming a new European state and formally dissolving the last union of the former Yugoslavia. The lawmakers declared the envelope Montenegro as a "multiethnic, multiconfessional multilingual civil society ... based on the rule of law and market economy." The declaration also said Montenegro would immediately start procedures for admission to the United Nations and other international organizations. It was careful, however, to acknowledge its former partner Serbia by stating Montenegro's "special interest and full readiness" for "traditional and friendly relations with Serbia." Serbia and Montenegro are linked culturally as well as historically, sharing the same Christian orthodox religion and language. AP

17 alleged terrorists arrested in Ontario

OTTAWA—Seventeen Canadian residents have been arrested and charged with plotting to destroy targets in Ontario with truck bombs and assaults, the Canadian authorities announced Saturday. At a news conference in the Toronto suburb of Mississauga, the police and intelligence officials said they had been monitoring the group for some time and moved in to make the arrests on Friday after its members took delivery of three tons of ammonium nitrate, a fertilizer that can be turned into explosives when combined with fuel oil. "It was their intent to use it for a terrorist attack," said a Royal Canadian Mounted Police assistant commissioner, Mike McDonell. "If I can portray to someone you, the 1995 bombing in the federal building in Oklahoma City that killed 168 people was completed with only one tenth of ammonium nitrate." The "3" name—almost all its members or family—Arab, with one Pakistani and one 50-year-old—had planned to attack sites in the southern part of Ontario, the police said. They declined to identify specific targets, though they did dismiss reports in the news media that Toronto's subway system was on the list. AFP

Bush presses for gay-marriage ban

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush on Saturday urged the Senate to pass a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage, in a congressional election-year effort to court conservatives whose enthusiasm for him has cooled. The Senate next week plans to debate a proposed amendment against gay marriage, though it is believed to have little chance of passing. "Marriage is the most enduring and important human institution, honored and encouraged in all cultures and by many religious faith," Bush said in his weekly radio address. "Ages of experience have taught us that the commitment of unlikeliest adults sets its love and to carve one another promotes the welfare of children and the stability of society." Bush said a constitutional amendment was needed to keep "activist" judges from overturning efforts by state legislatures to ban gay marriage. Reuters

Scientists: No big Indon quake again soon

YOGYAKARTA, Indonesia—There is little danger of another strong earthquake in Indonesia's Java island in the near future, scientists said Tuesday, as many survivors continued mourn their dead. There's not enough energy ... to trigger a big earthquake," Suwoto, a volcanologist in the country's geological disaster management center, told AFP. He also fled the aftershocks around the city of Yogyakarta since the powerful May 27 earthquake on "very small," at a magnitude of 2.0 to 3.0, adding: "There is no danger to the population." Some of the tens of thousands of people left homeless by the 6.3-magnitude quake which struck a week ago, killing more than 5,200 people, have been afraid to go back to their homes due to hundreds of minor aftershocks. AFP

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Melendrez

RP women win, near record finish

By Ray Lauzo

TURIN, ITALY—THE PHILIPPINE women team's time ran come.

Defying the odds again, the Filipinas secured the preliminary, 2.5-0.5, in Round 12 on Saturday to bolster their drive for a best-ever finish in the Chess Olympiad.

In stunning fashion, the team was seeded for a 2-2 draw with a Switzerland squad led by the pha-nomenal Viktor Kordessi, who downed young Filipino Grandmaster Mark Paragua on board 1.

Now the Filipinas have to beat the Brazilians convincingly in the 13th and final round of the 37th Chess Olympiad on the Olympic Village base on Sunday if they hope to match their 19th place finish in the 2004 Calvia Olympiad.

The Filipinas, on the other hand, are assured of improving on their 40th-place finish regardless of the outcome of their clash with the Slovenians.

Woman National Master Catherine Perena and Woman International Master Wendy Mendoza teamed WM Mirdes Tagamolo and Woman FIDE Master Sihaya Cruz-Gal on boards 1 and 2, respectively, to power the 60th-ranked Filipinas past 23rd-seeded Estonia.

Rookie Eberly Gan drew with WIM Viktoria Rukhkin in 30 moves of a Caro-Kann on board 3 as the Filipinas gained their second at 2.5-1.5 points, good for a share of 14th place with Slovenia, Scotland, Aruba, Ireland, Vietnam, Cuba, Netherlands and the Czech Republic.

Perena's team captain Cesar Caturla said he would be fielding the three against Slovenia.

The 20-year-old Perena, who has already earned an international with 6 points in nine rounds here, will unfold PWM Asira Matyishak while the 35-year-old Cruz, the team's highest-rated player with 6.5 points, will struggle with PWM Ana Srebrnic.

Mendoza clashes with WIM Jana Jelova.

A draw against Slovenia will enable the Filipinas to surpass their previous best finish of 20th in the 1998 Thessaloniki Olympiad, where the 59-player also posted their loftiest finish of seventh.

The men's team could have also won.

Now 2nd Olivo Villanueva outplayed IM Farhard Ermer on board 4 while GM Eugene Torre drew with GM Dmitrii Feldman on board 2.

However, Paragua, who won quality up [illegible] against two-time world title contender Kasimdzhanov, suffered under time pressure.

GM Rogelio Antonio, on the other hand, was forced into a book draw by GM Pavel Smirnov.

Men's team captain Sammy Estrera, however, is hopeful that Paragua and Antonio will deliver against GM Giovanni Vescovi and GM Nato Aiane Gaqze in round 13. Torre will be joined against

GM Jayne Gilberto Milat while Dimakiling will tangle with IM Alexander Hilario Toledo Hey, needing a win to gain his first GM norm.

GALLEGO

Gallego Bangkok 9-ball champ

BANGKOK—RAMIL "Ibbong" Gallego of the Philippines came from behind to down Hong Kong's Au Chi-wai, 11-9, and capture the Bangkok Jaya Ole Ole Miguel Asher's Ball Year yesterday at the Bang Na Hall.

The Japan-based Gallego gave the a poor start, allowing Au to take a 5-1 edge in the event organized by ESPN Star Sports.

But the cue artist from Bacolod City rallied to win the next five racks to seize the upperhand, 6-5. After splitting the next two racks, Gallego removed the gap to 8-6 after the Hong Kong player's dry break and lost on the 14th rack.

Gallego's dry break followed on the 15th, but the 2004 Tokyo 9-Ball champion managed to keep Au at bay, 13-9.

The Filipino then closed out the match in the pro-Filipino crowd led by Philippine Ambassador Antonio Rodriguez.

"I never lost hope even when I was behind," said the 2004 World Pool Championship Most Valuable Player. "I knew I could win because I was physically fit."

Gallego, who received a winning World Pool championship Wild Card, banked $10,000 or about P510,000 for the win.

Earlier in the day, Gallego scored his 11-9 triumph over Iran-born Swiss World Pool champion Chao Fong-pang.

Look who's out to kayo Manny Pacquiao

BANNY PACQUIAO IS BEING HUMBLED right in his own kitchen, not hoping how to being devastated he been tod.

Pacquiao could lose by konsensus decision, not against Oscar Larios, because the fight is far bound to last the full 12 rounds.

Pacquiao is being chased by his own manager Shelly Finkel.

That, in an unhappy nutshell, was how Bob Arum, who has produced at least three Filipino world champions—Gerry Peñalosa, Melchor "Super Mel" Cob Picon—has viewed Pacquiao's brewing trouble with his manager.

It's like this. Finkel's two-year management contract with Pacquiao is expiring on Jan. 31, 2009. Finkel's contract stipulates that he takes 30 percent of Pacquiao's purses, with his management partners, lawyers Keith Davidson and Nick Khan, splitting another five percent.)

But, it sm obvious plot to jail Pacquiao off balance and get his hands tied for a contract renegotiation, Finkel has filed a suit against lawyer Franklin Gorel and Salud.

* * *

Salud is an adviser and trusted friend of Pacquiao; Gorel is the controversial Pacquiao's personal confi-

Pacman's July 2 bout against Larios is being handled by Manny Pacquiao Promotions, Inc.

No need for a boxing forensics here. Finkel has, in the process, viticully sued Pacquiao himself.

Finkel, as detailed by the Star's Joaquin Henson, has accused Gorel and Salud of fraud and contract interference in negotiating Pacquiao's fight against Larios with ABS-CBN. The giant network gave Pacquiao's promotional company $4 million to stage the July 2 card. Pacquiao is to get $3 million of the total budget as his guaranteed purse. But Finkel, entitled in agreement age of Pacquiao's purse, wanted a share from the $4-million total budget,

Bare Eye

Jacob Trinidad

out from $1 million. Finkel and associates are demanding 25 percent of the $4 million budget.

* * *

Here's the catch: Finkel, our lawyer Gorel, is agreeable to withdrawing his suit if he gets what he has been demanding since the Larios fight.

Explained Gorel: "If he shares in $1 million, he's agreeable to no extension; if he shares in $1.5 million, he wants an extension of one fight; if he shares in $2 million, he wants an extension of two fights; if he shares in $2.5 million, he wants an extension of three fights. If he shares in $3 million, his rightful cut, he's going to sweat."

Now! That's a lot of dosey-doeh which should not be boggling Pacquiao's music system at this point.

But, his colorful appraisal of the music, let's hear it, a dedicated Pacquiao backer, Gary Granidero, manager of world light flyweight champ Brian Viloria: "Rewarding to the amount in the Manila Daily Bulletin, Finkel and Kahn have alleged that Gorel and Salud reneged Manny into signing a duodecimo group contract with ABS-CBN for seminar fees with the July 2nd Larios fight. Was from the same people who installed their friend Gary Show as Manny's promoter for the Pacquiao-Morales II and paid him $250,000 out of Manny's end of the purse—a sweetheart deal that stank to high heavens. Where's the fiduciary accountability? From my vantage point, the only thing disadvantageous in that $400-CBN deal is that, seemingly Finkel and Kahn are having a difficult time taking control of the horses. Plus, the ABS-CBN deal appears to be a boondoc one for Manny and his promotional company, but not for Finkel and Kahn. And, for a real laugh, I'd love to hear Finkel's and Kahn's legal theories as to what duty Manny owes them for a contract extension. Instead of Larios, Manny should just take three two-out setups to the ring and massage their bosoms."

* * *

Thank you, sir.

That statement was emailed by Gilbert Abadilla to boxing expert Hermie Rivera, an alumnus to this kind of dirty infighting.

Meanwhile, trainer Freddie Roach, mainly responsible for bringing in Finkel into Team Pacquiao, has also stirred hell. He said the Sesquicached, bald-headed manager who had handled the likes of Mike Tyson and Evander Holyfield, has no business distracting Pacquiao at the height of training.

Unless Finkel wanted to destroy the Filipino national treasure.

MANILDO A
put up a cha
Washington

STANDINGS W L
La Salle 5 0
Adamson 5 2
Far Eastern 3 2
U. Santo Tomas 4 3
Ateneo 3 3
UP 2 4
ADAMSON TODAY
(Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
11 a.m. — San Sebastian vs. Ateneo
4 p.m. — FEU-DILIMAN vs. Adamson

V-League: Adamson faces FEU in key tiff

ADAMSON DEFENDING ... swings against the Fusion and Generating rebels San Sebastian and Ateneo clashes a few wins in the semifinal round of the Shakey's V-League on the third leg at Rizal Memorial Sports Complex today.

The Lady Falcons, coming off a two-week break, are eligible to extend its undefeated second place standing behind Cherry Tiwi Meneseguez, the two are's leading scorer.

Adamson finished the eliminations with a 5-2 record behind La Salle, which stretched its unbeaten record to eight-in-a-row with a 25-20, 25-20, 25-9, 25-23, 15-5 beating of San Sebastian Saturday.

The Lady Falcons al so hope to avenge their eliminations loss to the Lady Tamaraws, who are going into the game fresh off a come-from-behind, 25-23, 25-27, 25-23, 25-27, 15-13 victory over the Lady Warriors.

"They've had a breather ing time," said Adamson coach Haydi Pajarillo.

Marc Anthony Reyes

San Juan Int'l starts today

AS IMPRESSIVE CAST of bowlers and bowlettes plunge into action today in the SLC 9-Pack International Derby at the San Juan Coliseum with Singapore Compliance 3000 as sponsor. The first of more than 500 flights of the 11-day Handicap Pin affair will see Dave Gabucci Mananzan as who will team up with Jun Esperon and JS Gonzalez to form the trio. So Esperon, call 726-6088 or 726-6402 or 0917-8869000 and look for Ronnie.

PCAP derby under way

THE BATTLE FOR THE Pinoy Cookers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) Cookie of the Year title heats up today at the Makati Coliseum with the ranging who's cook slowly represented by 5-King Tasty Ass and with 170 fights on tap. The Cookie of the Year winners will get PT million. Tito Sison Pharmaceutical of boasting stars Manny Pacquiao and Jenny Sison sponsored the fight with 25 bonnets. Half is paid up on the Ria Rites entry of Bombay Glass.

Government Warning: Cigarette sm

Realtors overpower Pals in farewell game

By Jane Navarro

ITS, LUZIA BOMITS MADE SURE IT wouldn't have another disastrous farewell game of the season.

Scoring on the breeze of Dennis Espino and Kenneth Duremdes, the Realtors booted out of the PBA Philippine Cup with a 112-101 whipping of the Talk 'N Text Phone-Pals last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Espino and Duremdes fired 12 points each in the third period as the Realtors built twin-digit leads they sustained the rest of the way after trailing 46-53 at the half.

"We were really frustrated with the loss against Coca-Cola last Friday," said Sta. Lucia Realty coach Alfrancis Chua. "At least we finished on a good note and (can now) start thinking of the draft."

The Realtors have nine players with expiring contracts—key players Wilfred Omobia, Maxwell Tolmie and Chester Tolentino, among them, while the rest are all rumpsteel players.

"There will be changes in the lineup but not that much," said Chua, whose Realtors will engage the Phone Pals in a rubber-a-reminder which team gets the top overall pick next season. "We could probably get another big man on lineup and a shooter."

The Phone Pals, however, have already given up their first-round pick to Ato2, after Talk 'N Text acquired Harry De Ocampo, producing the 2000 season. The lottery is set for Game 3 of the best-of-seven Finals.

The 2006 PBA rookie draft is tentatively scheduled on Aug. 20.

The scores

FR. LUZIA 112—Espino 20, Duremdes 18, Ayala 15, Ovalles 12, Libanan 11, Galeras 10, Mendoza 9, Arnaiz 6, Abrera 6, Yap 5, Mercado 3, Jamora 1

TNT 'N TXT 101—Fajardo 34, Cortez 22, Hidalgo 13, Ebarrientos 13, Pinkaw 12, Alcoy 4, Tenio 4, Jaime 2, Perez

Stanley 25-32, 49-62, 80-88, 112-101

PBC INT'L OPEN

Suarez, Rey pace Class O doubles by 9

Winston

Stirring Class

Winston

Winston

Enjoy True Quality

moking is dangerous to your health.

Pagadian scuttles Taguig

SPORTS

Mavs enter finals

Dallas makes Suns set in Phoenix

PHOENIX—DIRK NOWITZKI gained sweet revenge for the Dallas Mavericks as he guided them past the Phoenix Suns, 102-93, Saturday to a berth in the National Basketball Association Finals for the first time.

The big German scored 28 points and 10 rebounds and Josh Howard added 20 points and had 15 rebounds for the Mavericks, who won the best-of-seven Western Conference series 4-2 to advance to the finals for the first time in their 26-year franchise history.

Dallas will host Game One of the 11-title Thursday night against the Miami Heat.

Nowitzki, coming off a career-high 50 points in Game Five in Dallas Thursday night, had 16 of his 24 points in the second half to help Dallas win its third straight game on the road.

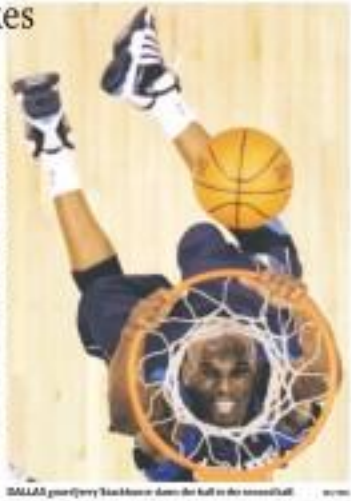
"We just stuck with it," Nowitzki told reporters reminded after the win.

"After losses a good road team could continue losing, we believed in each other. We went through some ups and downs this season, but the playoffs is all about showing heart and playing together and believing in a system."

It was sweet revenge for Nowitzki and the Mavs, who were knocked out of the playoffs by the Suns last year on their home court.

"Last year they knocked us out in six. We remained the favor and were on their home court like they did last year."

The Mavericks trailed by as many as 14 points in the second quarter and by 23 in the third quarter, but rallied behind Howard to finally oust the Suns, who played two seven-game series against the Los Angeles Lakers and Clippers before finally running out of gas. Reuters



DALLAS guard Jerry Stackhouse dunks the ball in the second half. REUTERS

Nadal survives gutsy French foe, banana

PARIS—RAFAEL NADAL PAUTEMPERE:

Not because he was on the threat of a possible upset Saturday, a nearly 3-hour match against an unheralded Frenchman playing brilliantly and backed by 15,000 rowdy countrymen in the stands. Nope, much sooner than that. The defending French Open champ realized he was dodging an uptown of bananas, right there on center court, in the middle of a game. When he was serving for the third set.

So Nadal put the ball in his pocket, walked over to sit in his changeover chair, and told the chair umpire he needed help. It was the oddest of pauses, the sort of thing you might expect to see in a public park, not at Grand Slam tournament.

In any event, Nadal managed to show his threat and get past a tough foe from the 28th-seeded Paul-Henri Mathieu, outlasting him, 6-7, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4, to reach the fourth round and improve to 16-0 on Roland Garros.

"I was getting pretty nervous and a little frightened. It wasn't that I couldn't breathe, but I felt something strange," said Nadal, who turned 20 on Saturday. "So I said, 'Wow, I'm going to stop. I'm going to go to a doctor or something.' I thought it could have a tragedy here. And if it looked bad, I didn't care."

The interruption only added to the theatrical nature of the match, which included an epic first set that lasted 1 hour, 54 minutes, a game in which Mathieu saved nine break points, and only three games in the entire 10 sticks, with both players making remarkable returns.

Still, Nadal marshaled his recent winning streak on clay to 30 matches, and if that's to become 37, he'll have to beat two-time major champion Lleyton Hewitt for the first time. They meet in the fourth round Monday because Hewitt beat No. 22 Fernando Verdasco, 7-6 (7), 6-2, 2-6, 2-6, 2.

"He's an extremely tough player right at the moment, especially on this surface," said Hewitt, who is 3-0 against Nadal, all on hard courts.

Players often use bananas to help avoid cramping during lengthy matches, and Nadal seemed to be chomping on them at every changeover, including at 5-4 in the third set. One bite slipped into his throat during the first point of that game, the player's face went pink, then stopped. Shaking, he shook a banana peel, and pointed to his neck, as though to say, "Help me." A trainer came out and rubbed him, then a doctor, during the 3-minute delay. Eventually OK, he finished off the game in short order.

"He's very, very good on clay, but I don't think it's impossible to beat him," said Mathieu. "It's difficult, but it's not impossible."

Meanwhile, Dinara Safina lost to No. 32 Gisela Dulko 6-1, 6-1, leaving Venus Williams as the only American remaining in the tournament. AP

NADAL: 'Bear' stoke—on a banana. REUTERS

Mamaya wastes little time taking Binay Cup

By Manny R. Castillo

MC THREE CHOICE MAMAYA JUMPED OUT of the game hard under Reynardo Raquel and ran a blistering pace yesterday to win the IBA meeting of the Alpinist Binay Cup by wire-to-wire style en route to a unopposed Last Mayor.

The four-point-old Jess Billy started to an eye-popping pace in the middle two quarters that no one in the six-horse field could match before pouring it all out in the last, to finish first by a four-length victory on a hard track at the Sta. Ana Park in Makati City.

Aside from the P360,000 top purse, the speedy Mamaya clocked in impressive 1 minute and 12 seconds over 1,300 meters with quarters of 19, 22.5, 24, 25.5.

"My mount really chases when she's seeing the pace," Raquel told the bettors in Pilipino.

"And it was good that she won out there in front alone."

Last Mayor, owned by Alfred T. Tinio, came within two and-lining brights of Mamaya before the eventual victor pulled away at the final turn to win with plenty to spare.

Tinio, the betting favorite odds to Joe Mel Cuesa, jumped out hands and flashed to the wire position before finishing second.

Lovers No Doubt finished fifth while Vikkyed brought up the rear.

Meanwhile, Head To Heal joined the list of nominated entries for the JV Cuppin Cup, the second leg of the 2006 Triple Crowns series on June 18 over 1,300 meters—about fair, sun.

Dina Rangel, in call to the Amadeus Egmont stable, will shoot for the second jewel against basically the same field he mastered at the Jan Lance of times Fish last month.

Special Edition, the second place to Don Quinquel, Jr. Sonny Tipon to strikes, Batang Silon and Million Dollar, the first leg favorite have also been considered to dispute the top.

Williams, Devance lead MVP race

GAME 1 TONIGHT (Ultimate Sports Center/ 21 st.—Batter Mon vs Bobcats Assistant to Job 1 p.m.—Sprite Ma vs Shrine Center Game 1 Finals)

By Jeannie Vi. Puyo

PABLE TWO TEAMS PROVED TO BE the revelations of the 29th Unity Cup, three were no surprises when Joe Devance and Jolly Williams emerged true-trainees to the top for the MVP plum.

Based on statistics, Williams of Magnolia for Cream has a slight lead with averages of 17.4 points and 12.7 rebounds per game.

Devance of Sports Otis is second, his other counting 23.6 points, 9.1 rebounds and 1.4 blocks.

But while Williams' efforts failed to boom Magnolia past the quarterfinals, Devance will continue to be the focal point when Tuvera Otis goes for its first title versus Shoshou Gotaro—after a 5-

KICKOFF: The 28th dahlia floral championship opens at the P-MAC Dyrn in La Salle Green Hills with a ceremonial kickoff led by Jhess left; Adidas sports marketing manager Gandy Custodio, Adidas chief finance officer Joel Ocampo, National Capital Region Football Association president Jose Rizo Barcenas and LSGH athletics director Hongming Cuising.

M. Soccer captures futsal title

MANILA SOCCER ACADEMY DEBdated a determined but underestimated Ramond cadet to chalkers a 1-3 win last Saturday to bag the first MSAA-AA-SA Premier Football League championship at the Greenhills Rink for Angela Alarilla, Montinlupa City.

Rafinel Leyble finally seized the marginal goal in the 41st minute from near the left goal post after a tap-out by Ramond goalie Ramon Wilson, who could not forbid the shot of Rodney Lopez following a scramble.

Ramond tried in vain to equalize but couldn't make any headway after losing the MSA bosters to bag the numbers title of the event organized by the Mandaluyan Lee Dylan Pershing Football Association and sponsored by Floyd Aldous, Siemens and Shoemike Protects.

Akidong line Dale whipped Mandaluyan Football Club, 4-2, to cop third place in the consolation also hosted by Stanford Quached, Sobers gone, Lou Bridges, Ramond Quached, Lou, East Point Bank and Motiva, the official ball.

Joaquin Peyabet, Philippine Football Federation futsal commissioner chair, MSAA president Cathy Sevilla and MSAA general secretary Gilda Anthony awarded the trophies and medals in the closing rites.

MSA midfielder Roberto Cabezal bagged the Most Valuable Player award. Remember was adjudged as best midfielder, teammate Brock Orozco best defender, while MSA's Anthony Lozano and Richard Leyble, who had eight goals each, best striker. Ryuki Ellie Dalit's Ted Galatio took home goalie honors.

Miñoza P740,000 richer

FILIPINO ACE PRAMOTE Miñoza registered his best finish so far in the early season of the Japan Tour by shaving 15th place in the ACE Clinic Sweets at the Omotesando Kokusai Golf Club in Hiraiji, Japan.

MIÑOZA

Miñoza, chasing honorees the Asian Tour and the Japan Tour this year, had a final round of even-par 71, after rounds of 71, 70 and 76, that left him in a four-way tie at 218, 14 strokes off winner Hideto Tanihara.

Miñoza pocketed 1,379,000 yen, or about P740,000. He jumped 20 ranks in the money list to 59th after five events.

Over at the Skyjade UPCA Classic at the Sweetwater Resort and Spa course in New Jersey, the Philippines' Jennifer Rosales likewise played on course for a decent winning after registering her second straight one-under 71 for a share of 18th spot.

Rosales' 140 total was eight shots behind leader Ai Miyazato of Japan.

CLEAN LIVING

Manuelo R. Diggs

Milo marathon stages Cavite leg on June 26

AFTER A 13-WEEK SUMMER BREAK, the 16th National Milo Marathon returns on June 26 for an eliminations race in Cavite City.

The 26-leg foot race opened in Malabon City on Jan. 29 and few already made stops in the cities of Tagaytay, Batangas, Dumaguete, Puerto Princesa and Laoag.

On June 25, the country's biggest and longest-running marathon goes to Cavite City where more than 5,000 runners are expected to participate. Organizing the Cavite leg is Vice Mayor Dino Chua, whose office on the second floor of the Cavite City Hall at the Sunsong Park is also the registration center.

The top three finishers in the open-to-all 21.0-km race in the men's and women's divisions will join the race qualifiers to the Grand National Finals on Dec. 10 in Clarke, Pampanga.

The event which is expected to draw the most number of participants in Cavite is the 5K fun run where the easiest competition as well as the lenient limits and fastest runners will join.

An age-group 5K race will also be held for the 5-9 and 10-12 years old categories.

Aside from cherry trophies and medals, a total of P200,000 in cash prizes is also at stake for the top 10 finishers in each race category.

UE belles top Shakey's tourney of champs

UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST TOPPED THE SHAKEY'S PRESIDENT'S CHAMPIONS TEN-TENNIS by disposing University of Southern Philippines, 21-20, 20-19, 21-20, at the Ateneo Blue Eagle gym. The title was the second in a month's span for the latest after also bagging the crown at the Women's Girls Volleyball Pre-National League. UE is also the reigning champion at the UAAP. The lone case of heartbreaking loss for USP, who fought to the last set but still came up short. Jean Martin knocks in two victory "crossing spikes" attempts as Ten-Shot Volleyball Player (MVP) of the match. Her teammate Gabriel Ann Rosario also nearly collected a double-double during the Shakey's Girls' Lady Warriors' Coach Alvin Rosario are

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Bronie G. Velarde

PADILLA: Mother Lily says she's "IL"

Entertainment vs stories of national interest

By Nini Valera

WORDS DONE A NETWORK DIDN'T like this time can "objectively and adequately qualify which events are solely entertainment in nature and which are matters of national interest?"

GMA 7 passes the question to Maria Bristol, ABS-CBN senior vice president and head of News and Current Affairs, who earlier said that exclusive coverage was common practice in entertainment—for instance, celebrity weddings—but not in coverage of news events.

Nonoy made the statement after GMA 7 wrote ABS-CBN a cease-and-desist letter on the latter's coverage of climber Ramon Gardiner's 8th Everest bid.

The letter informed ABS-CBN that GMA 7 had the exclusive right to cover Gardiner's climb. Bristol said coverage of events of national interest, such as the Everest story, should not be "exclusive" to a single news organization.

In a statement sent to Inquirer Entertainment on Friday night, GMA 7 head of corporate communications Beth Raquel said that in the Philippines, and even in other countries like the US, "a big event in the life of a famous celebrity is almost always of great interest to the public, thus naturally becoming a news event."

The statement continued: "To claim that an event is solely entertainment in nature just because the personalities concerned are well-known entertainment celebrities, is to also say that those lies the line

(ENTERTAINMENT, A2) ▸

Zsazsa, Zsazsa!

Comic-book movie, an MMFF entry, has a new director and star

By Reuyni Sun Diego Jr.

A NEW DIRECTOR IS NOW ATTACHED TO the movie version of Carlo Vergara's comic book "Ang Kagilagilalas na Pakikipagsapalaran ni Enteng Cosmicnik."

"Zsazsa," which is produced by Regal Entertainment, is among the approved 10 entries in this year's Metro Manila Film Festival.

MMFF first Director Joel Lamangan ("Mano Po") takes over the director's chair, succeeding another MMFF first Director Mark Meily ("Crying Ladies").

This development was confirmed by Meily, Lamangan and Regal producer Lily Monteverde.

"Mark and Mother Lily decided on this because they couldn't agree on one aspect of the production," Lamangan said.

The switch was made two weeks ago.

Meily explained: "I understand Mother Lily's position. For a Filipino film to break even nowadays, it needs to recover three times its production cost. If your budget is P20 million for example, a film needs to earn at least P60 million. My requirement was a little higher than what she had in mind."

Effects of crisis

Specifically, Meily had envisioned the flashback scenes to animated sequences; it is "Still Bill," she said, but would require an additional P5 million, "which means the film would need to make an extra P15 million."

Meily explained that "there are concerns of fears of the crisis in the movie industry. Producers are still saddled with high taxes. Producers cannot avail of rebates (on amusement taxes) from the Cinema Evaluation Board) during the MMFF's two-week run."

"There is no issue, no problem," Lamangan insisted. "I've talked to Mark and I understood his reasons for not pushing through with the project. I suppose he also understands why I accepted it. Someone say no to Mother Lily."

"We studied the matter very carefully" Monteverde told Inquirer Entertainment in a phone interview last Saturday. "We didn't want to hurt the people who'd be affected by the changes."

Bix Carmelgan, a member of the MMFF selection and screening committee, pointed out that "changing the director is not a violation of the film fest's rules... especially since the new director of 'Zsazsa' is also an award-winning filmmaker."

Third choice

"The producer only needs to formally inform the committee, which will approve the change. But I don't see any problem about that," opined Wilson Tieng, another committee member.

Carmelgan asserted that the committee would be more concerned if the cast had been changed. "Should there be a change in the lead stars, the replacements should be of equal stature and bankability."

Lamangan divulged that "everything is still up in the air, when it comes to the cast."

"There is a chance that the cast will be changed," Monteverde concurred. "Casting is always dependent on the director's recommendation. In of room, Zsazsa Padilla might get the role back."

Originally Kris Aquino was cast as "Imana," after Aquino pressed unavailable,

(CINEMA) A3 ▸

FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND

A. LUPIN BY JOS ABRERA

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY BY NIC JUNIOR

ATOMO AND WEDDY BY VINA GARCELLANO

HUTTS BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PAGULAYAN

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

			3			8		
	4	7	8		9		3	
1		8				2	6	
	6			3			8	5
			6	5	7			
5	1			8			2	
	8	5				7		2
	2		1		6	3	5	
		1			8			

Difficulty Level ★

How to play Su Doku

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answers to Monday's puzzle will appear in this space

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY You are definitely artistic. You have a vivid imagination. You have a wide range of interests. Family is very important to you. However, some relatives and friends will consider you to be a bit eccentric. You're not afraid to test your limits! This year, friendships and partnerships will be extremely important. You will have to be more open then.
Birthdate of: Mac Castillo, actor; Sandra Bullock, comedienne; Hilary Duff, singer-actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You're tempted to go overboard when spending money today. You might even succeed if deep down you can't resist. Remember, you can't afford to take advantage of an honest-to-goodness bargain.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Some kind of secretive indulgence will tempt you today. It could be related to food, drinking or gambling. Keeping overboard with everything 24 karate combo-you is a characteristic for Taurus.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Don't make promises or work that you can't keep. Give yourself a reasonable deadline for everything. Your attempt to please somebody today could get you into big trouble tomorrow.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) It's good to be generous to friends, but there is such a thing as taking it to extremes. Your generosity is giving what is needed. Don't let to impress anybody with an

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Because you want to make a good impression on an important person today, you're tempted to tell a little white lie. You might convince some-one, but you'll regret it later.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) You might have to make some sacrifices to get what you want. There's a tendency to go overboard in

today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Don't allow your fear of failure to keep you from your rightful share of something. Take it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Small feelings between you and partners or friends could make you go overboard with gambling or spending today. Be fo-

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Today brings opportunities your way. Make sure you're ready to take advantage of them by researching and accumulating knowledge. Don't make promises to people that you can't keep. Don't try to please everybody.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) You could get involved in gambling today. You might even be tempted to cheat. Don't succumb to making promises to children. Try to keep things in control. Avoid financial involvement.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You could spend too much money on family members or something special for your home today. Be careful. Don't overdo it. Keep a level, but you don't want to bankrupt yourself.

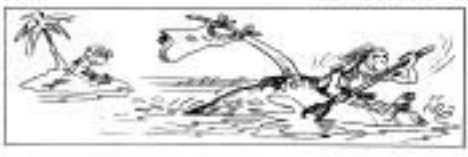
PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) You're very sensitive about something. You'll make sure you get satisfaction. Be careful about what you say. Don't provoke others.

DAILY CROSSWORD

MIND MACHINE BY MARK ABRERA

LOVEBYTES BY ELIZABETH CHONGLO

FOLKNIK BY RAFLANG TATUM HILARIDAD



Toti Fuentes in Cagayan de Oro concert on June 24

SILVER UNIVERSITY IN CAGAYAN DE ORO and the city itself are currently in the thick of preparations for what they consider a landmark event—the homecoming visit and concert of international musician Toti Fuentes, June 22-24, 2006.

Billed "An Evening with Toti Fuentes (Cagayan's Pride)" the concert is presented by lawyer Rufus Rodriguez, a Xavier U alumnus like Fuentes.

Concert proceeds will fund the refurbishing of the university museum.

Fuentes is flying in from China, where he is based.

Call 722-0808 or (0917) 890-1809.

TOTI Fuentes

HSMP

MTV Youth Fair

Music, gadgets and gaming scene together as the MTV Youth Fair, June 11 and 12 at the Rockwell Tent in Makati. Yin 4C Montero, Cindy Kimberly and Marc Abaya host a show featuring icons of today's fashion beats—Orion Lerma, Ep Dharma Glenn, Indayaman, Keyboard, Bedcak, Rivaz, Sheila and the Innerz, and Pandayo Hi-Edge.

Meanwhile, "MTV Live" continues at Café Lupe in Makati. Catch Pupil on June 9, Tone Rich on June 23, and Orange and Lemon on June 30. Shows start at 8:30 p.m. Call 890-3939.

D'ALNCE and Lemons

Moves show moved

"This Moves Like Jo Montiz" has been moved to August. Ticket tickets will be relicensed. Call 891-9999.

Today

Michaelangelo and Overtone at Tavern on the Square.

Silk and Steel at Mark's Bar Bistro, Greenbelt 2.

Tomorrow

Jollianne and 3SH at Tavern on the Square.

Aeolia and the Sealed Out Band at Mark's Bar.

June 7
Pat Dwegues and Session Road at Tavern on the Square.

Wednesday: Jam Festival at Mark's Bar with Richard Mark, Eddie Kalaidig and Judith Reed.

June 8
Acoustic Jive at Mark's Bar.

Rooney Street at Tavern on the Square.

June 9
Pat Session at Tavern on the Square.

MTV Live Sessions at Café Lupe featuring Pupil.

Hardellas at Robinsons Metro East.

June 10
Brown Republic at Tavern on the Square.

Aeolia and the Sealed Out Band at Mark's Bar.

June 12
Shotgun of Soul and Elmbo at Tavern on the Square.

Silk and Steel at Mark's Bar Bistro, Greenbelt 2.

June 13
Jollianne and 3SH at Tavern on the Square.

Aeolia and the Sealed Out Band at Mark's Bar.

June 14
Sandibox and MYNP at Tavern on the Square.

Wednesday: Jam Festival at Mark's Bar with Richard Mark, Eddie Kalaidig and Judith Reed.

June 15
Daji Diaz at Tavern on the Square.

Acoustic Jive at Mark's Bar.

June 16
Concludes 2006 World Tour at the Kuala Bay Viewpoint.

Subject to SM Malls.

SHOW TIME

Zsazsa, Zsazsa!

From page A2-1

Bal's film Quinto and Diddik were rewarded for his part.

Mon: "Diamir" means look to, well, Dagon.

"I talked to Bals film last night."

Mendevozin recounted. "Lucho said, it would be better for her because she has another story, 'Short Time.'"

As for Ogie Alcasid, who was originally tapped by Diddy to play Sala, the gay beautician who turns into superheroine Zsazsa Zaturnada?

"I haven't talked to Ogie yet," Mendevozin said. "He is in the US."

Entertainment vs stories...

From page A2-1

which will upset entertainment from news events. But in reality, there is actually none."

Raquel pointed out that there was no rule that said celebrity weddings or deaths were entertainment events.

"Same events, just like the attempt to the suicide of Everest, genuinely tortured and, as a result, not news events," he said.

Raquel recalled that GMA 7 had previously been denied coverage of entertainment events by ABS-CBN, which owned the exclusive coverage right to such events, like the wedding of then governor-elect Singson Jackie Lopez.

ABS-CBN says: 'Apples should be compared to apples. We've said our piece; we rest our case'

During the wedding, GMA 7 news crews outside the Manila Cathedral were denied entry, Raquel moved.

Likewise, he said, GMA 7 had been denied coverage of the funeral and burial of young actor Rico Yan, who was an ABS-CBN talent.

Raquel insisted that his network had consistently treated the Everest attempt as a historic event.

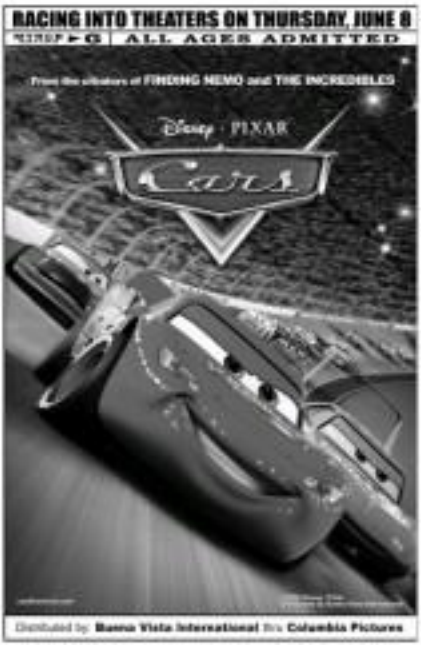
"Since we have the exclusive coverage rights to the summit bid of Asaf Bandana. And all events related to it, the network found it appropriate to audit the billion dollars about it," he said, adding that GMA 7's coverage of the other Filipino mountaineers, particularly Ocampo and Emara who were supported by ABS-CBN, was not without complimentary strokes.

"There were occasions when our DSL Everest team or the Base Camp was restricted from covering the ABS-CBN expeditionary members," Raquel said.

Sought out for comment, Mabil R. Espinosa, ABS-CBN vice president for government and corporate affairs, merely replied: "We've said our piece; we rest our case. Entertainment stories should not be compared to Everest. Apples should be compared to apples. As Maria Ressa has said, we don't have exclusives on news events. Perhaps GMA 7 should remember an encyclical of Clarice on Pope John Paul II. But that would only make the argument longer."

'MURDER, I DO'

Today at 11:30 a.m. on the Hallmark Channel, catch the replay of "Detective Murdoch Mysteries: Except the Dying." First of the trilogy "Murder, I Do," which premiered last night. The second part airs June 11, 9 p.m., the third on June 18, same time, with new six-hour movies.



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GALLERIA

1 X-MEN 3 + THE
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 FAILURE TO LAUNCH
4 X-MEN 3
5 THE DA VINCI CODE
6 THE DA VINCI CODE
7 OVER THE HEDGE
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
8 MANAY PO
9 CHAOS
10 THE BENCHWARMERS

ERMITA

1 X-MEN 3
2 FAILURE TO LAUNCH
3 THE BIG WHITE
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
4 ALL ABOUT LOVE
5 CHAOS
6 THE BENCHWARMERS
7 MANAY PO

METRO EAST

1 CHAOS
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 FAILURE TO LAUNCH
4 THE DA VINCI CODE
5 OVER THE HEDGE
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
6 THE BENCHWARMERS
7 X-MEN 3
8 MANAY PO

NOVALICHES

1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 MANAY PO
4 FAILURE TO LAUNCH
5 X-MEN 3
6 THE BENCHWARMERS

CITISQUARE MALABON

1 X-MEN 3
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER

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2 X-MEN 3
3 ALL ABOUT LOVE
4 FAILURE TO LAUNCH

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1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 THE BENCHWARMERS
4 MANAY PO
5 X-MEN 3

LIPA

1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 THE BENCHWARMERS
4 MANAY PO
5 X-MEN 3

DASMARINAS

1 MANAY PO
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 X-MEN 3
4 ALL ABOUT LOVE
5 THE BENCHWARMERS

ANGELES

1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 MANAY PO
4 X-MEN 3

IMUS

1 ALL ABOUT LOVE
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 X-MEN 3
4 THE BENCHWARMERS
5 MANAY PO
6 BANDIDAS

STARMILLS

1 THE BENCHWARMERS
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 ALL ABOUT LOVE
4 MANAY PO
5 X-MEN 3
6 OVER THE HEDGE / WU 3

BACOLOD

1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 X-MEN 3 / POSEIDON
3 ALL ABOUT LOVE
4 THE BENCHWARMERS
5 OVER THE HEDGE
6 MANAY PO

ILOILO

1 X-MEN 3
2 MANAY PO
3 ALL ABOUT LOVE
4 THE DA VINCI CODE
5 THE BENCHWARMERS
6 BANDIDAS

The Perfect Gift All Year Round
A Pre-Paid Movie Pass to the Hottest Seats in town.

Hundreds turn out for 1st 'Idol' tryout

By Marinel R. Cruz

THOUSANDS TURNED OUT ON SATURDAY AT THE first major "Philippine Idol" auditions at the PICC in Pasay City, but only 89 went home with the highly coveted blue ticket.

"Blue means you're in," said ABC 5 executive Ata Lorenzo, half of an all-important duo in charge of the casting for the first season of the reality talent search on ABC 5. Carmela M. Bolante, supervising professor in music at the Philippine Normal University, helped Lorenzo pick the lucky few.

Only a total of 100 blue buttons are supposed to be given out. But major auditions in Mindanao (Davao City) and the Visayas (Cebu City) are set to be held on June 22 and July 1, respectively. The organizers said they will decide later whether or not to increase the quota.

On Saturday, contestants began lining up at the PICC Gate 2 at 6 a.m. They were asked to fill up application forms and were each given numbers.

At the time of last year Entertainment's visit to mid-afternoon, the number of applicants had already exceeded a thousand. As we write, the recorded number has reached almost 2,000.

Said Evelyn Joseph, program production associate, "The casting is preliminary to the final elimination, which will be made by three judges."

ABC 5 announced the judges last week: Ryan Cayabyab, Asin's Jaseve of Song Pilita Corrales and rapper-TV host Francis Magalona.

HECTIC. At the end of the day, the number of applicants had risen to almost 2,000. This was the scene inside the PICC in Pasay City.

KODAK-KOTOH

"Planet Action" on the Animal Planet

Nickelodeon's Kids' Choice Awards

NICKTOONS, CELEBRATE YOUR powers to choose! The much-awaited Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards (KCA) Premiere Party is back. It is the only awards show that gives kids the power to vote for their favorites—in movies, television, music, sports and much more—and honors their opinions with a live presentation featuring the stars of their choice.

Mark the date: July 6, 2006. Make your way to the Alive Theater, Eon City CCP Complex, Pasay City. Entry opens at 3 p.m. and the show starts at 4 p.m.

But before then, remember that the nominee who gets the most votes in the Fave Movie Star category on June 1 and is reigning for the Nissy Shemaker award—the trophy given to a celebrity whose kids consider as their role model—this year's nominees are: "Pinoy Big Brother" hunk, Sam Milby; "Girls Big Star" grand champ Sam Concepcion; JV-favorite star and commercial model Kim Gitandio; boxing champion Manny Pacquiao; and TV host Bianca Gonzalez.

You can vote online at www.nickcplat.com/kca. The Kids' Choice Awards is now in its 19th year.

KID FIT

Garfield at Robinsons

Garfield is visiting Robinsons malls this month and next. Kids are invited to meet and greet actions with the famous feline on June 11 at Robinsons Metrowest, June 11 at Robinsons Place Novaliches, June 18 at SM Manila and June 17 at SM Fairview. Fees to pass by SM Sucat/after six p.m. SM Sta. Rosa on June 25 and SM Sucat on July 1. "Garfield: A Tale of Two Kitties," opens June 14 in all Robinsons theaters.

Animal Planet news

Around the globe, animals and their habitats are being threatened. The danger is often the result of human behaviors... pollution, global warming, deforestation and fishing practices. In these viewers how they can help the conservation team, Animal Planet and World Wildlife Fund present "Planet Action," an all-new eco-reality series. The series premiered on June 3 (Saturdays, June 17) and continues for six episodes—June 10, 17, 24, July 1, July 8.

'Cartoonival' in July

"Cartoonival," Cartoon Network's first-ever theatrical production, kicks before Philippine audiences in July.

For the first time ever, CN's popular toons will act together in a stage production.

The cast includes The Powerpuff Girls, Dexter & Dee Dee, Ed Edd 'n Eddy and Courage, plus Mao Mao and their friends from Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends.

Details will be announced on CN.

Disney curriculum

Playhouse Disney Channel, Pink Disney TV's second pay-TV in the Philippines—and the country's first and only pay-TV channel devoted to preschoolers—offers programs based on the Whole Child Curriculum, developed by early childhood specialist Dr. Sharon Darrow-O'Leary. The channel is currently available on Destiny Cable TV, SkyCable Plantown, Lan White Cable TV, Bluemidscope Cable TV and Pembapo Cable TV in Metro Manila.

GARFIELD

'Dokyus' both good & bland

By Paul Dizz
Contributor

ABC 5'S WEEKEND LATE HOUR "DOKYU" HAS become a popular program among independent and documentary filmmakers. By presenting two Filipino-made documentaries every Thursday night to a passionate niche audience, "Dokyu" has become the only notable venue for works considered by the majority as capsules we see in the TV landscape. In fact, many Pinoy indie filmmakers dream of having their works exhibited on the program.

Like any regular show, however, "Dokyu" has good episodes and bland ones. A recent bumper about homosexuality turned out, surprisingly, to be dull and boring. After that, however, came a heartbreaking eye-opener about children Americans who spend $25,000 to adopt unwanted babies in China.

Review

Hit or miss

The series' hit-or-miss quality was once again obvious in the June 1 telecast, which featured two works shot in Cebu. "Inno Bali" (Wanna Eat Inna, Friend?)" was by three Filipinos who studied in the famed London International Film School. "Images Of Women In Cebuano Films," was the thesis project of Dianne Nicolas, a Mass Communications student in UP Cebu. Of the two, the latter was definitely more substantial.

Despite modest budget, quality, a charming Cebuano music score and impressively clear audio, "Inno" didn't feel much like a docu. Instead of thoroughly researching the subject and consulting cultural and religious experts about the popularity of the Caribbean dating hostel, all the filmmakers did were chat up customers and staff owners apparently during the same night. It felt more like a "One Night in Lucerna" slice-of-life featurette.

Sure, it was mildly surprising to see an American and a Swede enjoying barbecued chicken and pork inasuman; and yes, it's cute to ask a customer he don't every time he lives with a customer that shouldn't documentaries be more filling? At the end of the eight-minute featurette, we're told by a friend of the filmmakers that "Inno" was a big hit when it was screened in London. An investigation into why that was or was have been more interesting to Pinoy viewers, who probably don't see nothing more we ehig deal.

Though not as technically polished, Dianne Nicolas' "Images Of Women in Cebuano Films" was a more satisfying viewing experience. More than 25 minutes long, it used clips from more than 30 Cebuano movies and included the laughter of more than a dozen filmmakers, academicians, and equal rights proponents. Using variety to follow interviews and judicious editing, Nicolas succeeds in her two-fold objective of revealing the predictable and clichéd portrayal of females in Cebuano movies, and showing that Cebu used to have a thriving film industry. She nibbles our minds with questions such as, "Why are single women always shown alone in their bedrooms?" and "Why is there invariably a scene in every Cebuano film where the mother is shown in the kitchen?"

RP cinema's future

Also thought-provoking are the roundtable discussions made by two interviewees about the future of Philippine cinema. One man says trajectories that show women as victims will forever be a staple of movies; another says that all clichés and stereotypes must be discarded if cinema is to survive.

Dianne Nicolas' docu makes the viewer hope not only for the renaissance of Cebuano films and Filipino films in general, but also for the rise of more female Filipino filmmakers. Since it's obvious that she hopes in one day see a more realistic and accurate portrayal of females in local films, maybe she should put her obvious talent to good use and make a feature film, stat.

DANTE Basco, Fil-Am actor and dancer (far left), with the inter-cultural cast of "Take the Lead," headed by Antonio Banderas

Crank up the feel-good factor

Critic singles out 'sexy tango' featuring Fil-Am actor Dante Basco

Review

NEW YORK, LIKE "LOVER OF BOLEYN," the disorbearing film based on the documentary "Tuguses and 2 Boys," "Take the Lead" was a far more effective story in its original nonfiction form.

It's inspired by the work of Pierre Dulaine, whose dance classes in inner New York City public schools also provided the basis for the charming 2005 documentary "Mad I Set Ballroom."

But the movie has been moved from downtown to uptown high school, and the feel-good factor has been cranked up. ("Mad I Set Ballroom" put a smile on your face without trying to hard.)

Here, Antonio Banderas serves up tough love to at-risk kids as the old-world Dulaine, trashing them the tango and the dance with the hope that they'll simultaneously learn discipline and dignity. But Banderas is no Dewey Johns gentleman by romantic nature, he makes a predictable movie more tolerable than it should be.

The features debut from Liz Friedlander is short and edited to fluid, vibrant babies, as you would expect from a veteran music video director. But the speed with which these kids combine traditional ballroom dance steps with modern hip hop moves gets down disqualified; it's campy but fun.)

There there are a couple of cases of forbidden interracial love, including the tentative romance between the two tango, two Black Monster (gender giant Brandon T. Jackson) and the very petite, very white Caitlin (Lauren Collins), who practice for her upcoming cotillion with Pierre's low-income conflict outside the halls: more social strife with them than the rest of the Upper East Side.

"You need to dance for yourself, not for anybody else," Pierre tells Caitlin, a shamelessly unchaste line, but Banderas doesn't oversell it, which surprisingly makes it work. Collins is sweet and sort of lovely in her awkwardness as the recovering soul of rich advice, which helps a great deal.

Among the other potentially antagonizing lines that Pierre at his voice coaches his students: "I look around this room and all I see is choices—choices waiting to be made."

You have a choice, too. You could go out and see this feel-good fairytale and be mistakenly entertained, or rent "Mad I Set Ballroom" and feel yourself becoming genuinely moved by the real thing.

Chrissy Lovatos, AP

Battle of the blockbusters

"THE DA VINCI CODE" DROPPED AN impressive $77M on its first weekend, but its triumph has turned out to be distinctly short-lived. The following week, it was pushed down to second place by "X-Men: The Last Stand," which demolished the competition with a whopping $103M first-weekend take.

Many blockbusters rule the box office for at least two weekends, but "Da Vinci" failed to "defend" its supremacy because the "X-Men" sequel was so strong.

What made it such a giant killer? We believe the fact that it was advertised as the last "X-Men" episode had something to do with it. Fans of the franchise must have felt they simply had to see it to round out their entire "X-Men" experience.

In addition, the "Farewell" format made it logical for the production to showcase a veritable convention of super-mutants, thus **making for greater variety and excitement** throughout.

Finally, the production also benefited from good reviews and positive word of **mouth from satisfied movie-viewers.**

A related question: Why have movies **about monsters, some of whom look rather** weird and even "monstrous," clicked so **well with viewers?**

The answer derives part of its "weird" logic from the similar popularity of fairy tales through the centuries.

Some fairy tales feature "monsters" like the "Beast" in "Beauty and the Beast," the title characters in the "Shrek" films, plus assorted ghosts, ghoulies, witches and grotesque gargoyles in other stories for children.

The fact that "scary" characters are lapped up by children indicates how potent and obviously appealing tales about monsters are, because they enable kids to "exercise" their own real demons in a safe, "reinforced" atmosphere.

So, will "The Last Stand" really be the final "X-Men" episode? Yes, but not as movie-literate characters like Wolverine will totally spin-off movies of their own.

That's another kind of "mutation" happening right there!

Final notes: We've been told that "The Last Stand" has entered the fourth biggest debut ever, after "Spider-Man," "The Revenge of the Sith" and "Shrek 2." It's interesting to note that all four top-grossing films have strong fantasy elements going for them.

This may seem surprising and even **amazing in these ultra-real times, but it is** fact harks back to the very origins of cinema. **As the very dawn of filmmaking, the** cinema asserted its primal strength as a purveyor of dreams, fantasy and magic, thanks to the pioneering movies of visionaries like Georges Méliès.

Flash-forward 100 years to today, and the movies' dream world is once again exercising its subliminal power over today's viewers.

There's a seminal lesson to be learned from that cinematic determination. How are know-it-why fantasy-based films have triumphed in the movies' continuing Battle of the Blockbusters.

Prayer for Manny P

Friends of Manny Pichel are asked to say a prayer for him in observance of his third death anniversary. Manny's sister, Lolit Mora, is grateful for the loving thoughts and affectionate recollections shared by her brother's many friends and colleagues in the music industry, Harana and media worlds, and in the academe.

For our part, we remember more Manny's nice combination of hell-bent, unrelenting and generosity.

Stories about Manny's generosity—even to total strangers, particularly the poorest of the poor—continue to inspire his friends, and one filmmaker-colleague even wrote a screenplay based on one of them.

Generosity is its own reward, as we know that Manny has been richly rewarded. Yes, we continue to miss and pray for him, but as we told Lolit, let's express our love to Manny by loving the people who mean so much to him...love you, Lolit!

VIEWFINDER

NESTOR U. TORRE

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 CHAOS
3 [illegible]
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
4 X-MEN 3
PREMIERE THEATRE
FAILURE TO LAUNCH
Catch the Cineplex Special
A Blockbuster Gift for All Seasons
The Shang Cineplex Gift Certificates

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City
THE DA VINCI CODE
FAILURE TO LAUNCH
BENCHWARMERS
ALL ABOUT LOVE
CHAOS
SAMAN THE LAST STAND

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
THEATRE MALL
PROMENADE
1 X-MEN III
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 FAILURE TO LAUNCH
4 BENCHWARMERS
5 X-MEN III
MANANG MO

ARANETA CENTER
Gateway MALL Farmers Plaza
Cinema CINEARTS 10
CHAOS
BENCHWARMERS
FAILURE TO LAUNCH
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANANG PO
THE DA VINCI CODE
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
OVER THE HEDGE
X-MEN 3
X-MEN 3
MALL CINEMAS
1 X-MEN 3
2 CHAOS
3 THE DA VINCI CODE
4 MANANG PO
5 ALL ABOUT LOVE
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X-MEN
THE LAST STAND
NOW SHOWING AT
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movietime
INSIDE MAN
REGULAR SHOWING STARTS JUNE 7
THE BENCHWARMERS
NOW SHOWING AT SM CINEMAS
IMAX
EVENT CALENDAR
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EVENT CALENDAR
MAXMEDIA PRESENTS
Cueshé
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Tickets available at TICKETWORLD 891-9999 | 891-9999

ENTERTAINMENT

Juday, Ryan will wed next year, says her mom

JUDY ANN SANTOS AND RYAN AGONCILLO are set to marry next year, according to Judy's mom Carol. The couple are not going to "commercialize" the wedding—you know, sponsored this and that and exclusive coverage stuff, as is the custom for celebrity weddings these days.

But first they have two movies coming up! That's one for late this year, and another for early next.

Judge in a movie!

"Philippine Idol" judge Pilita Corrales is living out in a Metro Manila Film Festival entry starring Lito Lapid. If she accepts, she will play granny much herself—as Dyesebel. But it is Dolly Pictorial.

Asia princess

The same movie is trying to cast Sarah Geronimo as an Asia princess. Isn't the girl done enough for a lifetime?

'Secret' breadwinner

A young, lately popular, actress refuses to answer questions about her family and, necessarily, her humble beginnings. She doesn't want the world to know she's the breadwinner, but has agreed to guest in a talk show's episode on... breadwinners!

shiloh.com

LOS ANGELES—Angelina Jolie has reserved 24 domain names featuring various versions of her daughter Shiloh Nouvel's name. Internet registrars files show that the 9Mb addresses "shilohjolie," "shilohpitt," "shilohjolie-pitt," "shilohnouvelpitt," "shilohnouvel-pitt" and "shilohnouveljolie-pitt" — with the extensions ".com," ".org," ".net" and ".info" — were reserved as of May 27, the baby's birthday. AFP

'Sexiest man' available

LOS ANGELES—The "sexiest man alive" is available again.

Heathers McConaughey and Spanish beauty Penelope Cruz "have decided to split," Cruz spokesperson Robert Garbolt told The Associated Press Friday. McConaughey's rep, Alan Nierob, confirmed the breakup, first reported by People magazine. AP

Hit bed

LOS ANGELES—Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, Nicole Kidman and Tom Cruise, Melanie Griffith and Antonio Banderas. Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger. Penelope Cruz and Matthew McConaughey. Jennifer Aniston and ... Brad Pitt?

High profile pairings (Gina Lollobrigida and Vittorio Mezzogiorno don't count) share another thing: love blossomed on the set.

The latest addition to the list, Jennifer Aniston and Vince Vaughn—whose rumpled chemistry has been reported widely, though they refuse to officially confirm it—met while making "The Break-Up," opening in Manila in August. AP

Lee in HK

HONG KONG—Hollywood stars Leonardo DiCaprio and Matt Damon, who star in "The Departed"—a remake of the Hong Kong blockbuster "Infernal Affairs"—will visit the Chinese territory to promote the film, a news report said Saturday. The movie will be accompanied by the movie's director Martin Scorsese. The report did not say when they were expected. AP

JUDY Ann Santos

RUSHES

PILITA Corrales

SARAH Geronimo

JENNIFER Aniston

Priscilla opera rehab

LOS ANGELES—Priscilla Presley planned to speak at the opening of a drug rehabilitation center in Michigan last Saturday. She went to help inaugurate the 12-bed Narconon Metro Hawk East residential center in Huron, Michigan. Her late husband, Elvis Presley, had persistent problems with pharmaceutical drugs. AP

2 for Ziyi

HONG KONG—Chinese screen Zhang Ziyi has signed on for three movies to be produced by Fanney Movieants, including a film about Chinese folk heroine Hua Mulan and a remake of Japanese classic "The Seven Samurai," a news report said. Zhang confirmed she would star in the three movies when she met Peterson at Cannes, the Chinese-language news Web site Sina.com said Monday. AP

'Cathartic' for Jen

LOS ANGELES— Speaking of "The Break-Up," Jennifer Aniston says she agreed to do it because "it was sort of like in a way, more, a cathartic thing." She divorced Brad Pitt in October, after four and a half years of marriage.

NICOLE Kidman and Tom Cruise

JENNIFER Garner and Ben Affleck

PENELOPE Cruz and Matthew McConaughey

MELANIE Griffith and Antonio Banderas

OPENS JUNE 14

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BUSINESS

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Finance disputes tax perks to Globe, Smart

Says 3G investments will be made even without incentives

By Michelle V. Rosco

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE HAS QUESTIONED THE prudence of granting tax perks to industry giants Globe Telecom Inc. and Smart Communications Inc. for their investments in 3G technology.

A ranking Finance official said tax breaks related to investments in 3G technology were the best example of "voluntary" fiscal incentives because Globe and Smart were expected to have made the investments anyway even without the perks.

"I don't know why they gave the incentives. We will go to 3G no matter what because it is the way of the future," the official pointed out, adding that Smart and Globe would have made the investments even for the sole reason of marketability of the 3G technology.

The Board of Investments (BOI), the agency tasked with approving fiscal incentives, granted various perks to Smart and Globe for their investments in 3G technology. The incentives included duty-free importation of capital goods and income tax holiday for six years.

The government, which is grappling with huge budget deficits, is estimated to lose billions of pesos in potential revenue collection because of the granting of fiscal incentives to the profitable telecom companies.

FINANCE B4

Cebu Pac cuts fares by up to 43%

By Dennis L. Lanza

BUDGET AIRLINE Cebu Pacific Air Inc. has further reduced its two discount schemes for early bookings, cutting prices by almost half in a bid to draw in more flyers during the off-peak season.

At the same time, the Gokongwei-owned airline said that it was set to receive two more Airbus A319 single-aisle aircraft as part of a rebooting program that has so far boosted its seat capacity by 20 percent.

"It's all about making travel more affordable so that more Filipinos can fly," Cebu Pacific president and CEO Lance Gokongwei said in a statement. "We are taking delivery of our seventh and eighth Airbus aircraft this week and we are more than halfway through with our rebooting program."

He added that by August, the airline would have an all-Airbus fleet—having retired its old DC-9 aircraft, which will also be the youngest fleet in the country.

"We will have increased our capacity by more than 40 percent," he said. "This means that we will have more seats to offer even at lower fares."

The additional capacity coming on stream this week prompted the airline to reduce fares further.

The "permanent" Go Fare program is part of the airline's strategy of selling seats to local destinations below cost to build up economies of scale.

Cebu Pacific said the price cut of up to 43 percent for some domestic destinations were made available starting last Friday, June 2.

"The lowest Go Fare to any Visayas destination is now P568 one-way, while the lowest Go Fare to any Mindanao destination is

CEBU B2

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Dull trading seen

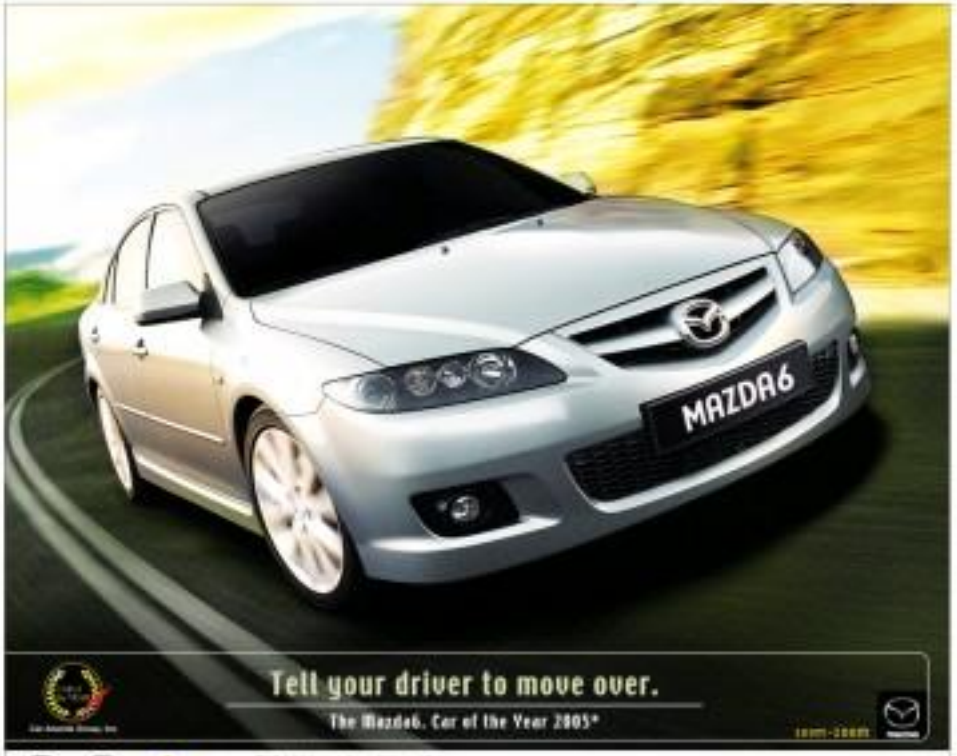
STOCK MARKET INVESTORS ARE EXPECTED TO witness another new bearish week given high-risk core a possible interest rate increase.

Fitzgerald Gerlach, head of research and strategy at BDO Trust, said there could be selldown for bargain hunting if the US market picked up Friday.

AB Capital Securities said that while corporate long-term fundamentals remained solid. The macroeconomic picture has been mixed with market players worried about higher interest rates and rising inflation.

"Despite some favorable developments in Iran, crude oil has remained above $72 a barrel as we enter into the busy trading season in the US. Meanwhile, there is growing pressure on domestic interest rates as in-

TABLE B6



BIR wants 2007 target reduced

By Michelle V Remo

AFTER REJECTING FOR A much lower target for 2006, the Bureau of Internal Revenue has made a formal request that its tax collection goal for next year be reduced as well, stressing that the government's system of setting targets was flawed.

Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buting proposed that instead of being assigned a tax collection goal of P590 billion, his office should be asked to collect only P480.3 billion in taxes next year. His proposed revision is 17 percent reduction from the program.

"There are several things [militating] against with the way the BIR annual target is set at the moment, which we should discuss," Buting said in a letter to Finance Secretary Margarito Teves.

Buting, who was earlier asked to resign by Rep. Jory Isidoro for the BIR's collection shortfall in April, said his proposed target for 2007 amounts to a 16-percent growth from the BIR's likely tax collection this year.

He said the BIR could potentially collect P482.4 billion this year, 11 percent lower than the officials target of P657.5 billion.

Buting earlier asked the parliament of Finance, head agency of the BIR, to cut its 2006 tax goal of P590.4 billion, but the DOF chastised the request down.

The country's chief tax collector cited the three of the finance of the Treasury to substantially collect the volume of government securities being issued, saying this would slash the BIR's collection of documentary stamp tax to measly billion pesos.

Buting also said that P27 billion of the BIR's target this year should be considered as the Bureau of Customs to represent value-added tax on all because of the huge volume of oil imports. The BOC collects VAT on imported oil, while the BIR charges VAT on domestically produced or processed petroleum products.

Representatives from the BIR and the DOF are scheduled to meet this morning to discuss the request of the former to have a lower tax collection target for next year.

Earlier, Teves said the DOF did not find any reason, at least for now, to adjust the BIR's target.

No surprise after all

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

AS ANNOUNCED BY THE GOVERNMENT last week, domestic production of goods and services (GDP) grew by 5.5 percent in the first quarter of this year, while production by Philippines, regardless of where they are (GNP), grew by 5.8 percent.

This is good news if taken to represent attainment of the upper end of the government's revised target GDP growth range of 5-5.5 percent. But it has been pointed out, not the least by Malacañang's repeated top economic advisor in Congress, that this target had already been substantially reduced from the original 6.5-7.5 percent embodied in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP).

If we add the fact that the actual growth performance is among the weakest, if not the weakest in the region, the lower growth outturn become more a cause for concern rather than elation.

Proper assessment

Beyond the aggregate number, it is the quality of the growth that we ought to care about, more than the overall growth rate itself.

That is, was the growth evenly spread throughout the various production sectors, thereby leading to widespread benefits for Filipinos, or was it confined to a select few? Did the growth lead to a commensurate growth in the number of jobs for Filipino workers?

The other interesting question, particularly for investors, is whether the numbers indicate that the economy is picking up or slowing down. In judging this, should we compare current performance with that of a year ago, or with that of the immediate past quarter?

It is customary for our official reports to highlight the quarterly performance against that of the same quarter last year. But in the United States and many other countries, the economic growth figure that is announced is the annualized quarter-to-quarter growth rate, after correcting for seasonal movements. Small numbers find it more interesting to look at this quarter-to-quarter growth rate, as it gives a better indication of the current movement (or lack of it) in the economy.

Growth composition

Taken to the above light, how does the first quarter performance stack up? The full report released by the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) is quite transparent, and gives all the necessary details.

The 5.8 percent growth in GNP posted in the first quarter adds up as follows: 2.7 percent was contributed by services, 1.6 percent came from industry, 0.7 percent from agriculture, fishery and forestry and 0.7 percent from net factor income from abroad (mostly remittances).

The services sector accounts for almost half (16 million) of the jobs in the economy, led by wholesale and retail trade (with more than 6 million jobs), and transport, storage and communication (2.3 million jobs).

It is therefore a good sign that half of the growth in the economy comes from the sector that employs half of all working Filipinos.

But the continuing challenge is that a very minor part of the entire economy's growth is coming from the sector that directly employs more than 12 million Filipinos, or 2.3 million jobs!—the sector of our workers—agriculture, fishery and forestry.

We need to be able to design our policies to ensure more if the benefits of growth are to be more widely felt.

Slowdown and decline

On a sweet harm, the first quarter year-on-year growth rate of 5.5 percent improves on the corresponding 4.2 percent figure posted last year. That is good news.

But there is more bad news. Compared with the immediately preceding quarter, the domestic economy actually slowed down.

From a 1.6 percent seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter GDP growth rate in the fourth quarter of 2005, it is now down to just 0.9 percent. Worse, GNP did not just slow down; it actually fell by 0.9 percent from the previous quarter.

This is typical of the seasonal pattern of the quarter actually dropped, even after correcting for the seasonal surge that marks the last quarter of every year.

Furthermore, services slowed down from a 7-percent growth last year to 6.2 percent this year. The main cause in the dramatic slowdown in transport, storage and communication (10.7 down to 6.8 percent), with construction actually falling.

Clearly, the steep oil price increases led people to travel less, and reduced the movement of goods as well.

Vindication

Of interest to many are the revisions in the fourth-quarter growth figures that came with the release of the first quarter data. As reported by many, the final GDP growth figure for the last quarter of last year was one as impressive as first announced, it turns out to be more: 5.3 percent, not 5.1 percent as announced in January. This means that the full-year GDP growth actually fell short of 5 percent. GDP had grown by 6.9 percent, not 7.1 percent as previously announced.

While no one should be happy about a lower growth rate, the revision vindicates economic analysts, including ourselves in the Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development (ACERD), most of whom had projected that the economy would grow below 5 percent on a full-year basis in 2005.

Our theme Macroeconomic Forecasting Model of (MMFM) remains reliable after all. And what the economy described as a "surprising" performance of the economy in the final quarter of 2005 turns out not to have been that surprising after all.

Comments welcome at: habito@ateneo.edu

Cebu Pac cuts fares by up to 43%

Please page B-3

P868 one-way," the airline said.

It emphasized that Go Saver were permanent and not a temporary promotion like to its earlier P88 and P1 airfare schemes.

To get the discounts, however, diners must book and pay five days' flights at least one month in advance.

Manila to Cebu or any Visayas destination will henceforth cost only P868 one-way from the old rate of P888, representing a 20-percent cut, exclusive of charges.

Manila to Davao or any Mindanao destination will now cost only P968 one-way, reduced from P1,200 or a cut of more than 20 percent. Cebu to Davao or any other intra-island routes now cost only P968 one-way reduced from P998 or by 43 percent.

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Exports of coco-based products up 33.6%

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TOTAL EXPORTS OF COCONUT-based products went up by 33.6 percent in the first quarter as March volumes grew 83.5 percent, according to an industry report.

Data from the United Coconut Associations of the Philippines showed that exports dropped one during the quarter a total of 472,947 metric tons in copra equivalent from 354,122 MT in the same period last year.

Coconut oil exports, which grew by 43.8 percent to 226,220 MT, accounted for 34 percent of the shipments during the period.

Copra meal export increased 67 percent to 112,498 MT, while oleochemicals grew by 16 percent to 38,384 MT in copra terms. However, exports of desiccated or dehydrated coconut shrunk by 33 percent to 22,178 MT.

Also, Ocap said March volumes shot up to 203,605 MT in copra terms from 189,603 MT in the same month of 2004 as the average growth for most of the categories reached triple figures.

Coconut oil exports reached 112,887 MT in March or 87 percent higher than year-ago's 57,280 MT.

Copra meal volumes went up 87 percent to 39,173 MT and oleochemicals increased 147 percent to 8,167 MT in copra terms.

The only loser in March was desiccated coconut, which suffered an 8.9-percent drop to exports of 6,264 MT.

Rice production seen hitting all-time high of 15.2M MT

Good harvests help improve farmers' earnings

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE COUNTRY'S RICE PRODUCTION WOULD likely hit an all-time high of 15.2 million metric tons this year if the growth rates posted in the first six months would be sustained in the second semester of the year.

This level of production, according to agriculture officials, will enable the country to cut down its rice import by at least 60,000 metric tons this year.

The farm sector is seen to post higher production growth rates by the end of the year given the favorable weather condition, better irrigation support and quality seeds, said Agriculture Assistant Secretary and Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS) Director Romeo Recide in an interview.

BAS records showed that in the first quarter, a 7-percent growth in rice production to 2.6 million metric tons was recorded. In the second quarter, production increased by 9.8 percent to 2.9 million metric tons. Production is expected to increase by 16 percent in the third quarter. Fourth quarter production is expected to contribute the bulk of 40 percent to the total, Recide said.

The good harvests in the past months helped improve the farm gate prices of palay to a range of P12 to P13.50 per kilo from the previous level of P9 to P10 per kilo, National Food Authority Administrator Gregorio Tito said.

Tito noted that 9000 more palay procurement level had been low as farmers opted to sell their produce to private traders who offered attractive prices.

The positive rice yields, he added, possibly paved down the imports from 1.86 million metric tons last year to possibly 1.74 million metric tons this year.

The ballooning Philippine population puts more pressure on the country's food supply, with the average daily rice requirement of the country being 31,000 metric tons, he explained.

The agency, he said, had to resort to importation to meet the rising demand for the staple.

"Even if we become self-sufficient in rice this year, we will have to continue importing for one buffer," he added.

AT THE RATE harvests are increasing, self-sufficiency in rice may come for seldom reason.

Finance disputes tax ...

From page B1

Globe alone is estimated to save P2.5 billion in tax and duty payments because of the incentives.

Nevertheless, bulk of the investments of Smart and Globe will come from SL. Because of the incentives, the government would not be able to collect revenue taxes from them for six years," the DOF official said.

He said the foregone revenues would have potentially funded projects that would improve the country's infrastructure or ordinary basic services.

The DOF earlier said the tax perks were granted to the telecom giants because of the huge investments involved in the operation of 3G services. Smart's 3G project was reported to cost P32.38 billion, while that of Globe was estimated to reach P5.48 billion.

The investments are expected to result in hundreds of thousands of jobs, with Smart planning to hire 187 new employees to implement the 3G technology project.

3G technology will allow mobile phone users a quicker way of accessing the Internet using their handy wireless voice gadgets.

Equitable PCIB to jack up capital by ₱1B

By Doris C. Dumlao

EQUITABLE PCI BANK, THE COUNTRY'S third biggest lender, will raise its capital by P1 billion using dividends from subsidiaries, said EPCIBank vice chair Wilenton Garvin, president of the Government Service Insurance System.

Garvin said reporters he did not have a capital call to cover the bank's shortfall in capital versus risk assets.

"Our capital deficiency is only around P1 billion. We can correct that by dividends from subsidiary corporation," he said.

As of the first quarter, EPCIBank was capitalized at P43.5 billion. Garvin has long been opposing proposals for a capital call, which will force existing shareholders like the GSIS to shell out more money to prevent the dilution of their stake. The GSIS, which has decided to hold on to its shares rather than sell out before its acquisition cost of P82, is optimistic on the bank's prospects.

"I'm confident with the way management is running the bank. I'm confident that our chance of stock will reach greater heights. Before, I'm only interested in recovering was how I'm aiming to get a profit," he said.

A merger proposal by Banco de Oro Universal Bank has been shelved.

"Our executive has proven that the P30 (price per share) offer of BDO was really low. They (by group) have offered me even something higher," Garvin said.

DFNN posts ₱25M in Q1 profit

TECHNOLOGY SERVICES FIRM INVERSIFIED Financial Network Inc. (DFNN) said it posted a profit of P25 million in the first quarter, soaring the line of P14 million in the same quarter last year.

DFNN, in a financial report to the Philippine Stock Exchange, said its revenue surged 268 percent to P66.8 million in the first three months.

The company said its performance was boosted by services from its units Inverse Strategic Investment Group Inc. (Insigne). Where its created to P16.3 million. Also, it said that DFNN.com International, its foreign unit in Singapore, recorded a one-time gain.

DFNN owns 100 percent of application software developer and Internet services firm OPSN.Com.

It also owns 75 percent of technology consultancy firm Quantum Solutions Inc. and 51 percent of Insigne.

Quantum, in turn, holds a 30-percent stake in wireless solutions provider Intelligent Wave Philippines, Inc. (IWI).

OPSN develops, operates and maintains web-based and wireless applications for major corporations and government agencies. Its primary order routing software technology to stock brokerage firms and web-advertising services.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Undiplomatic maneuvers

From page B1

to the May 24 column were "misleading."

Strange reaction, since the quoted figures were vouchsafed from the National Statistical Coordination Board, which is calling for a public hearing on the highway rate petitions.

"We wish to assure the residents of Ayala Alabang Village[s] that Ayala's information is misleading, and we understand the concern it may have caused," wrote Raul Manila, president of the Ayala Land subsidiary, Ayala Property Management Corp.

Well, it was actually the residents of Ayala Alabang, a number of whom are retired Ayala executives, who approached Gatbalete and provided the initial documentation.

Since Ayala Land has chosen to publicly debate this issue, maybe it should also start explaining to Nasi and Laguna fishermen and residents how much longer the high-end subdivision would continue pumping water out of the Laguna de Bay portion under the subdivision's golf course.

Mati's challenged engineers

IT seems that the Mabati City Engineer's Office needs a math refresher course badly.

The 38-storey SSA Towers condominium fronting Greenhills has a total floor area of 17,730.36 square meters, yet the city engineers counted the parking and common areas to a whopping 12,186,038 sqm, enough to build 687 buildings of the same size.

Because of the erroneous computation, the condominium owner being assessed by City Hall for P177.9 million in property taxes just for the parking/common areas alone.

Heard through the grapevine

ACCRA has suffered a series of legal setbacks on behalf of its client, Dakin Industries, after the Court of Appeals ruled that no less than the Supreme Court disallows the split-up of proceedings and multiplicity of suits, as Accra's legal strategy for Dakin had sought for, starting at the Regional Trial Court level.

The Japanese company is being accused by its local resins partner, Alto-Ala of sabotaging the partnership, when it allegedly ruled that the company to sell imported Dakin ala-cellulosic cheaper than the one supplied by Dakin and assembled locally by Dakin-Alto-Ala.

Heard! contacts pd@philstar.net or cockfight_pd@yahoo.com

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GMA 7 defers IPO to early '07

Says network not in a rush to raise funds

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

TELEVISION GIANT GMA NETWORK INC. is pulling off its proposed maiden offering until the first quarter of 2007, saying it was not in a rush to raise fresh capital this year, company chief Felipe Gozon said.

GMA 7 earlier planned on an initial public offering in July.

However, Gozon said the network was also considering the financial climate after the recent tilt[illegible] in global stock markets.

"It's not [because of] shareholder matter [nor is it because of] any accounting issue[s]. We don't want to be pressured into listing. We don't need to raise new funds right now because we don't have any [outstanding] obligation," Gozon said.

Gozon said there were a number of initiatives the company wanted done this year to enhance the company's value.

He said GMA 7 was in talks with US media giant Time Warner to carry the network's programs in the East and West coasts.

"We are already in negotiations with Time Warner," Gozon said, adds from the United States. GMA 7 is also studying possible distribution partnerships in Canada.

For its entertainment as well as local expansion this year, Gozon said the network was willing to[illegible] P1 billion.

GMA 7 is also striving to tie net income targets this year of P1.6 billion, almost the same as its profit goal in 2005.

The network pruned the balance of its five-year, long-term loan or P1.6 billion in February last year, now inside the[illegible] of the scheduled due date of November. Previously using internally generated funds, GMA 7 paid more than P543 million in principal and interest.

In terms of its regional expansion, the company has upgraded its transmitter and other technical facilities in Cebu and Davao and has installed a transmitter in Bacolod. More improvements would also be implemented in other key cities in the country, the company said.

GMA News TV, which was launched in the United States, Japan, Guam and Micronesia last year and the Middle East and Caribbean, Gozon said, this year, it[illegible] to launch in other areas. As of last March, GMA Pinoy TV abroad had more than 80,000 subscribers.

Since its launch in November 2005, subsidiary GTV Channel 11 has also maintained its hold on the number three spot in ratings.

Brokers not keen on selling stocks

AN OFFER FROM HONG KONG INVESTMENT management firm Value Partners Ltd. to buy shares of the Philippine Stock Exchange Inc. (PSE) and Globe Telecom Inc. from two brokerages could not sell[illegible] to[illegible] investors, sources said.

VPL has offered to buy up to 5 percent or P153.6 million worth of ONE shares. It would help boost PSE efforts to become a fully demutualized company.

Demutualization will convert the bourse from a company controlled by stockbrokers to one[illegible] owned by various shareholders.

So far, brokers holding a[illegible] 40,000 shares were willing to unload, sources said. PSE closed at P128 last Friday. Another group of brokers owning an estimated 60,000 shares was reportedly also interested to sell its shares to the Hong Kong group.

PSE management will ask brokers to sign a letter of intent containing the price at which they are willing to unload, and the number of shares involved.

Sources estimated the PSE's indicative price was between P300 and P400 a share. At P300 a share, the PSE is trading at 26 times earnings based on last year's net income, which is a discount to other issues in the listed equity.

VPL, founded in 1995, manages more than $3 billion on behalf[illegible] individual and institutional investors and focuses on "great-but-under appreciated" Asian companies at[illegible] times. A[illegible] PSE shares, acquired through small purchases in the open market.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Dull ...

(Continued on page B2)

[illegible] point to[illegible] other developments in the government's tax collection efforts," AB Capital Investment said.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) earlier said the government's P375-billion tax collection target was too[illegible]. The BIR failed to achieve its[illegible] target for April but a[illegible] of P3.3 billion is still achievable[illegible] to increased collections from the Bureau of the Treasury and[illegible] from non-owned financial[illegible] operations.

Mildly[illegible] sanctions, the Bangko Sentral last week kept its[illegible] overnight rates unchanged.

The market's blue chip index PSEi, however, bucked last week, rising a mere 0.78 points to 2,304.17.

"The market was actually saved by foreign buying last Wednesday, as we were blue chips for the[illegible] index," AB Capital[illegible] gained on[illegible] through buying after reports of a[illegible] than-expected recession growth and[illegible] weakening consumption of the peso," AB Capital[illegible] noted.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

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Energy body to monitor granting of special electricity rates

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION is requiring National Power Corp., National Transmission Corp. and all distribution utilities (DUs) to submit monthly reports on the preferential rates they offer to certain customers.

A resolution signed last month required Magsaysay, Tarmac, all DUs and other regulated entities to submit reports on the DUs of every month, that include a list of customers enjoying preferential rates, the volume of electricity sold to each customer, the approved preferential rate for each customer, and the voltage level these customers are connected to.

"The granting of preferential rates may lead to cross-subsidies to other customers of DUs, Transco and Napocor. To protect the interest of the electricity consumers who are not granted preferential rates, the impact of the preferential rates must be monitored," the resolution states.

The resolution will take effect 15 days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Responding to calls for more competitive power rates for exporters, Napocor currently offers special rates to at least seven economic zones in the country.

The state firm has been offering "special and competitive generation rates" to these economic zones since August last year.

Benefiting from the lower power rates are the Subic Bay freeport in Zambales, the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga, the Cavite Export Processing Zone, the Baguio City Export Processing Zone and the Mactan Local Export Processing Zones in Cebu.

Napocor also wants to provide discounts to export-oriented enterprises located outside industrial estates.

The special discounts in preferential rates, however, will be subject to negotiations of the firms' minimum contracted energy.

SE Asia seen stronger, wiser after '97 crisis

Region not completely immune to external shocks

By Doris C. Dumlao

TOKYO—NINE YEARS AFTER THE currency turmoil that depressed asset prices across the region, Southeast Asia has emerged much stronger and wiser, but not completely immune to potentially contagious shocks, financial experts said.

"There's reason to be optimistic, but there's reason to be less sanguine," Hans Genberg, executive director for research at Hong Kong Monetary Authority, said at the World Bank's Second Conference on Developing Asian Economies (ABCDE) here.

He said capital flows to Asian emerging markets were still largely affected by investor risk levels and liquidity in developed countries.

"That could lead to risks of repricing assets in emerging markets, and potentially low level of capital inflows and, in the extreme scenario, a stop in capital inflows. In such a case, growth will slow down, and the macro-economic picture will look worse," he said.

Shannon Dadami and Hans Timmer, authors of the World Bank's Global Development Finance 2006, said emerging markets were seen as a much better footing and that growth would likely remain strong despite high oil prices.

They said that Asian markets learning from the currency crisis of 1997—And introduced reforms to improve their domestic economic fundamentals.

Genberg said there were at least two reasons to be more optimistic on the region: capital flows to emerging markets in recent years were in the form of foreign direct investments, rather than debt proceeds, and the increasing wealth in south-East Asian, or capital flows from developing countries to other developing countries.

The World Bank's GDF 2006 noted the following:

- Exchange rate regimes are now more flexible, with 62 percent of countries adopting this scheme versus 39 percent during the previous episode;
- Oil exporters and emerging Asia now have sizable current account surpluses and reserves;
- External debt positions have improved;
- Most countries have developed local debt markets.

There is less reliance on short-term debt, etc.

- FDI remains the #1 source of private capital flows versus 47 percent the last time.

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Lafayette issue closely watched by investors

THE PHILIPPINES CAN BE A MAjor player in mining and it can expect more investments than will create jobs and develop local communities, the Joint Foreign Chambers said in a statement.

The JFC, however, expressed concern over some events that, it said, might not just hold mining revitalization back but result in more reverses. The group was referring to Lafayette's Rapu Rapu project.

In the said statement, the JFC said the Rapu Rapu project had complied with all government requirements and should not be shattered by resource operations.

"We believe it should be allowed to do so, otherwise a negative signal to the international mining industry could result in a serious loss of investor interest," it added.

The statement mentioned the recommendations of the Environmental Impact Statement System Committee to close down Lafayette and restore mining laws. It added, though, that "it is very important that mining operations in the future proceed according to the guidelines of the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources)."

"Strengthening the law is not enough," it said, adding that its full implementation is the key. The group said its member-chambers were supporting responsible mining.

"The mining sector can be a major contributor to the future economic growth of the Philippines by providing skilled jobs in rural communities and significant revenue to the government," it said.

In the past 18 months, $3.48 million out of the $3.8 billion in foreign direct investments registered with the Board of Investments went to mining.

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Buñag backs Teves on revenue goals

BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE COMMISSIONER JOSE Maria Buñag expressed full support for Finance Secretary Margarito Teves' objective of meeting the government's P975 billion revenue target for the year, adding that the agency had been tapping all possible tax sources and moving up collection efforts to improve the haul.

Buñag said the Bureau of Internal Revenue was "solidly behind the optimism to eliminate budget deficit by 2008" and that it shared Teves' view that the 2006 revenue collection targets were reasonable and that in the effort to bring down the country's budget deficit to no more than P125 billion.

The BIR chief made the statement in response to reports that the BIR wanted a reduction in the revenue collection targets for 2006.

"No, I did not ask for a collection target reduction," Buñag said in the statement.

He said he was also supporting Teves' plan to reallocate the collection targets among the revenue agencies of the DOF. He also said Teves' plan to review the agency targets with the BIR, Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Treasury will help put raw revenue collection responsibilities in the proper perspective.

Teves earlier said the revenue might lead to an eventual reallocation of targets within the agencies when the figures come in sometime in June midway through the year-end collection goal.

He said some revenue targets lodged with the BIR were actually being collected by and credited to other agencies. He cited the P27 billion in value added taxes on imported oil credited to the Bureau of Customs.

Buñag also said the BIR was set to work closely with the Bureau of Tax Research's Center and other government agencies to tap new opportunities and plug loopholes in the internal revenue drive.

He said the BIR was set to join hands with the Department of Trade and Industry in the stricter monitoring of the granting of tax incentives to local and international companies.

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LandBank to arrange P1.5-B MWSS bond offer

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS AND Sewerage System (MWSS) has tapped the Land Bank of the Philippines as its lead arranger and underwriter for its planned P1.5-billion bond offering.

According to MWSS Deputy Administrator Mario Cruz, the agency's board of directors has mandated the Land Bank to be its lead arranger and underwriter for the bond offering that would be used to pay off the outstanding debts of now concessionaire Maynilad Water Services Inc.

"Maynilad's debts...under what is referred to as concession fees—will fall due within the year," Cruz told the business.

MWSS Finance Department manager Romulo Pellosa said in another interview that the agency is now seeking the approval of the Department of Finance and the Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for a sovereign guarantee before the maker sells or proceeds with the bond offering next month.

According to Pellosa, the bond will only carry a one-year tenor.

MWSS officials failed to settle its concession fees beginning March 2001, the government agency took over the water concessionaire's debts amounting to more than P28 billion.

Maynilad's creditors include multilateral lending institutions like the Asian Development Bank, Japan Bank for International Cooperation and the World Bank.

The concession fees are used to service the old debts of the MWSS. When the two privatize concessionaires—including the Manila Water Co.—took over operations of the utility, they both assumed the debts of the MWSS.

Maynilad in particular absorbed 90 percent, or $800 million, of MWSS' debts because the agency took over the bulk of the concession area.

When Maynilad defaulted on the payment of its concession fees, the government had earlier decided to take over Maynilad while the private company was placed under rehabilitation.

At present, the MWSS holds the majority of Maynilad's equity, which it intends to bid out by the end of the third quarter.

Maynilad's designated court receiver, lawyer Ramon Ang, earlier said he was the sole proponent of payment of concession fees until a new investor comes in.

COIN RECIRCULATION

Four major business organizations have signed up to support the national coin recirculation program of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. BSP Gov. Amando Tetangco Jr. (fourth from right) shakes the hand of Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) president Donald Dee (third from right) as the conclusion of the BSP meeting with the business groups. Other signatories are (from right) Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. president Francis Chua; Employers' Confederation of the Philippines chair Miguel Varela; Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc. president Sergio Ortiz-Luis and BSP Deputy Gov. Diwa Guinigundo.

Sharp increases in world oil prices seen to benefit RP

OFWs in Mideast profit from price shocks, says analyst

By Doris C. Dumlao

TOKYO—WHILE MOST COUNTRIES around the world are reeling from the effects of the oil price shocks, the Philippines appears to be weathering the shocks, according to a top JP Morgan economist.

Remittances from overseas Filipino workers in the Middle East are providing the country with the much-needed insulation from external shocks brought on by surges in world oil prices, said Bill Oswald, JP Morgan's global head of emerging market quantitative strategy.

"The Philippines is a source of importer and, therefore, the increase of oil price has been negative for the country[,]" Oswald told the business at the sidelines of the World Bank's annual Bank Conference on Development Economics. "But if you look at the sources of the remittances to the Philippines, a lot of those are coming from the Middle East.

"If you look at the increase in the remittances over the last three to four years, it's about $3-$.5 billion, which is about the same as the increase in the oil import bill. So, although the Philippines has a higher import bill, it has indirectly benefited from the upside to oil price premium because of the boom on the remittance of reimbursement flowing from the Middle East back to the Philippines."

Later, Oswald pointed out that his view has not been "fully explored." He said that there are people who believe that the increase in remittances happens to be the result of a shift to formal banking channels which, in turn, picked up the reported figures.

"It's difficult to determine how much of that increase is due to the formalization of the flows or the natural increase in remittances," Oswald said. "But certainly looking at the behavior of the peso, you can also see that in the changes in the reserves and considering the external banker's balance of payment [situation], it indicates that [as it is a] win/increase in inflows."

The London-based Oswald was a panelist at a roundtable where the World Bank launched its latest global outlook on development finance.

According to the World Bank's Global Development Finance 2006, estimated remittance flows—defined as the sum of workers' remittances, compensation of employees, and migrant transfers—exceeded $233 billion worldwide in 2005, of which $167 billion had been received into developing countries.

Total flows, including those routed through informal channels, could even push the figure higher by 50 percent based on some estimates, the GDF said.

"Recently, high oil prices have swelled remittance flows from oil-exporting countries," the publication said. "Bahrain, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the Russian Federation have been important sources of remittance inflows to developing countries."

The GDF 2006 also said the depreciation of the US dollar erratic, in turn, raised the value of remittances when converted into local currencies, as well as the growth in the number of migrant and their incomes, had contributed further to the surge in remittances.

According to the World Bank, remittances bring the following advantages to developing countries:

- Household survey evidence indicates that remittances can have significant impact on reducing poverty.
- Remittances are associated with increased household investments in education, entrepreneurship and health, all of which have a high social return;
- Remittances tend to support economic activity in the face of adverse shocks; and,
- By generating a steady stream of foreign exchange, remittances can lessen a country's credit constraints.

ERC approves Napocor rate adjustment

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION has approved the inclusion of a P1.83 per kilowatt hour (/PHO) charge in the fuel and purchased power rate adjustment of the National Power Corp. for power contracted from the 360-megawatt (MW) San Roque Multipurpose Project in Pangasinan.

In an order dated Feb. 24, the ERC said the recoverable amount would be pegged on the effective date of the Lucena grid, or P3.83 per kWh—the rate that Napocor contracted to the capacity fee for the San Roque power plant.

The P3.83 per kWh rate was the same rate that the ERC allowed Napocor to include in its generation rate adjustment mechanism (GRAM) under a provisional authority issued on Nov. 26, 2004.

The recoverable amount could also be pegged on the purchased power rate under Napocor's build-operate-transfer (BOT) agreement for the San Roque plant, if this would be lower than the effective rate under the GRAM.

Under Napocor's contract with the San Roque consortium, the cost of electricity is P3.83 per kWh with the any component of the capacity fee spread over 12 years; 97.75 per kWh with the non-government spread over 20 years; and P6.13 per kWh as the annual committed rate of the consortium to Napocor for the January-December 2004 period.

While all the rates were more than the rate granted under the provisional authority, the ERC, in approving the inclusion of the San Roque contract in Napocor's FPCA, also considered the power plant's quantitative benefits in terms of reduced emissions, as well as its opportunity for increasing energy self-reliance.

"Given the increasing power requirements in the Luzon grid, the operation of the San Roque Multipurpose Project will enable Napocor to meet the increase in demand and will ensure the continuance of efficient and reliable power supply," the ERC order stated. "This is in accord with the government policy on the exploitation, development, utilization and conservation and conservation of energy resources with preference for environment-friendly and indigenous sources of energy."

Gov't seen to spend more to lure buyers of debt paper

THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT IS SAID to be paying more premium to lure investors to its debt paper as the "unfinished" domestic environment is seen to aggravate national market jitters.

Despite a relatively conducive auction for 182DC Global Research, said in a commentary dated May 29 that delays in adopting the 2006 national budget of P1.953 trillion had also evoked an already weak sentiment caused by a string of negative domestic and external factors in recent weeks.

"As a result, there has been a desire to reduce exposure to Philippine sovereign bond and dollar debt securities," Shahani said.

As of May 26, he noted that the five-year credit default swap (CDS) of Republic of the Philippines' (ROP) dollar-denominated bonds had widened by about 45.7 basis points to close at 206.33 basis points from a tight point of 160.57 basis points in 2005.

CDS is an instrument usually offered by banks as security against losses in cases of default. Its pricing thus reflects the market's assessment on the probability of default.

It was also noted that the five-year domestic Treasury bond yield had jumped to 13.37 percent on May 23 from only 6.63 percent at the start of May.

"Looking ahead, we feel there should be modest retracement in both the domestic and the US dollar market for Philippine debt in the coming weeks," Shahani said, noting that the government's strong cash position should ease concern about budget financing for 2006.

But Shahani said he could not envision Philippine debt paper going back to the tight points the country enjoyed earlier this year.

The HSBC analyst projected that the 8.87-five point CDS would trade at about 185-215 bps in the near term, and end the year at above the 200 bps mark.

Average five-year Fibond yield is seen slipping back to 7.75-8.25 percent from the current rate of 8.75 percent. It is also expected to rise at above 8 percent by yearend compared to the low of 8.44 percent last April.

"Prospects of higher global interest rates (in Japan and Europe), coupled with unfavorable domestic political events may suggest that investors will demand a slightly higher risk premium to hold on to Philippine financial assets," Shahani said. "Stalling of structural reforms and the inability to establish fiscal sustainability will translate to higher funding costs."

The big miss on the national government's revenue target for April, the analyst said, revived concerns that the go-

(CONTINUED ON B3)

ROUNDUP

The disputed Spratlys: To drill or not to drill?

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL Company-National Offshore Oil Co. (PNOC) and Malaysia's state-owned Petronas will decide in the fourth quarter whether to continue gathering data on, or to start drilling in, an area that includes the disputed Spratlys.

PNOC president and chief executive Eduardo Manalac said the three nations' oil companies had already gathered and processed 11,000 kilometers of seismic data in the area.

Data interpretation is ongoing at the PNOC grounds, conducted jointly by representatives from PNOC, DOSC and PetroVietnam, he said.

"We expect to complete the interpretation by late third quarter or early fourth quarter," he told reporters. "That would enable us to decide what to do next, either hold a second phase of seismic operations or decision drill."

—Abigail L. Ho

PCGG seeks to defer Philcomsat meet

THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION on Good Government has asked the Securities and Exchange Commission to defer the holding of a stockholder's meeting slated on an expanded agenda aimed at giving validity to the "settled board" of Philcomsat Holdings Corp. (PHC), PCGG chairman Orlando Merced said.

In a letter filed with the SEC, the PCGG said it is negotiating with all parties to conduct the stockholders' meetings of the three controversial Philcomsat firms, without one side have long since controlled since the government sequestered the firms in 1986.

The three firms are Philippine Overseas Telecommunications Corp., its subsidiary Philippine Telecommunications Investment Corp., and affiliate PHC.

—Elizabeth C. Angsoy

A backdoor listing on the big board

A BUMPY BACKDOOR listing of trash-talking operator Basic Holdin Inc. is now being eyed at a number of investors.

After announcing a P1.1 billion share swap deal early last month with online trading company Cashbuilder Inc., Basic Holdin and Cashbuilder are now talking that proposed deal one step at a time to meet requirements of the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Basic Holdin will continue to be listed in place at the SME board in the stock exchange's big board—absent companies capitalized at P400 million or more get to trade—Cashbuilder will have to acquire 51 percent of Basic Holdin's outstanding shares first valued at P7.2 billion.

—Elizabeth C. Angsoy

How to bring consumer prices down

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Bienvenido C. Oplas
General Editor

IN THE MARCHING ERA OF ever rising consumer prices, the only thing you can buy more cheaply today than ten years ago is live insurance.

Why this phenomenon? It's no wizard computation.

In 1994, in line with the recommendation of the Insurance Commission, within a twinkle of the pen and the approval of the Department of Finance, broke up the long-standing life insurance cartel.

Any decades before the AFM, the price of the insurance was fixed by a closely-knit cartel composed of all insurance companies, foreign and domestic.

The price list and the rules of the game were inscribed in an elaborate manual called the tariff. Severe penalties were slapped for violating—the industrial term was breaching—the tariff.

When the Insurance Code was constantly overdrawn in 1974, the five-insurance cartel became even more powerful.

It was the only cartel in our history so he endowed with a government license to operate.

In 1994, the Insurance Commission withdrew the cartel's license. The tariff was scrapped. Each company was free free to price its life insurance policies.

At the same time, the Commission threw the country open to foreign competition. A foreign company could come in through any of these doors: they into an existing domestic company, set up a subsidiary, or open a branch. Some of the world's largest companies accepted the invitation.

The insurance industry became the most liberalized business in the country.

The buyer could then choose from a dizzying array of products offered by various companies at highly-competitive prices.

On average, life insurance premiums today are about one-fifth what it used to be ten years ago. And these premiums are still falling.

And yet, the five insurance industry has never been as efficient, and companies are making tons of money. Business volume has gone up as people who never bought before are feeling the insurance bug for the first time.

At rock bottom prices, it is almost a mortal sin not to buy life insurance.

If I had my way, I would break up all the cartels, such as in oil, banking, steelmaking, cement, flour milling, etc., that plague the country.

I would set up a division at the Department of Justice to negotiate the antitrust provisions of the penal code.

This office would be similar to the all-powerful Anti-Trust Division of the US Department of Justice. Secretary Raul Gonzalez will have more fun running after cartels than the Batasan 5.

I would dismantle all price regulations in basic needs and price controlling councils. Consumer prices should not be set at meetings between sellers and buyers in air-conditioned government offices. Instead, prices should be allowed to rise and fall in the world open market at a free and open exchange.

I would scrap the so-called safeguard duties, such as those on imported cement and chicken, and all other protectionist codes.

It is ridiculous that Thai chicken should be slapped a 30-percent import tariff. I would ask our fellow voters to find out how the Thais have been able to cut costs.

Toyota has pushed General Motors, the world's largest corporation, to the brink of bankruptcy. GM would not dare ask the US government for a safeguard duty which would not be granted anyway.

Instead, GM is desperately cutting costs to make its cars competitive. The buyer can look forward to cheaper and better cars.

Likewise, the safeguard duty doesn't preserve the cement industry and the poultry raisers anyway. They end up having to cut, and with our industrial big three strengthen.

Without the safeguard duty, cement prices will go down, thus triggering a rise in demand. The cement factories and poultry raisers will have to crank up to meet the rising demand. They will have as much business they would not know what to do with their profits.

We should learn the lesson from the liberalization of the insurance industry. Then, we can all sit back and enjoy watching consumer prices—including interest rates—come tumbling down.

RP on track to host 3M tourists in '06–Durano

By Dimitri L. Lucas

THE COUNTRY MAY SEE AS MANY AS three million tourists visiting local shores after a sharp increase in visitor arrivals during the first four months of the year, the tourism department said.

If achieved, this number will represent an almost 15-percent increase over the 2.61 million visitors the country hosted last year.

In an interview, Tourism Secretary Joseph E. Durano expressed optimism that the three-million target can be achieved based on indications during the first part of the year, including the summer season or the last two months.

"The numbers are very good," he said. "The arrivals during the first four months are up 14 percent from the same period last year."

From January to April of this year, Durano said that the tourism department recorded almost one million tourist arrivals, including repatriate Filipinos living abroad or the so-called "balikbayans."

"What we're seeing so far is very encouraging," he added, noting that the surge in tourists was fueling an expansion in many business sectors, including the hotel industry which, in turn, means better business for the construction industry.

Based on the strong performance of the first four months of 2006, Durano said that tourists only has to grow by an average of 11 percent for the rest of the year for the government to meet its three-million target by yearend.

"It is very achievable," he added, even as he warned that visitor arrivals for the rest of the year may slacken off, especially during the traditional off-peak season of the second quarter.

"It will balance itself out over the rest of the year," he assured.

Last Friday, Durano launched the tourism department's partnership with private corporations to entice more tourists, especially expatriate Filipinos based in North America.

He said the program aims to draw in more tourists among the 3.3 million-strong Filipino community in the US and Canada, which is a traditionally large spending group.

Durano said that "US$1,600 tourists and 'balikbayans' visited the Philippines last year... the highest level in 20 years."

Almost half of these visitors were first-time travelers.

"We are aiming to increase this to at least 600,000 this year," Durano revealed. "What we capture at present is only a very small fraction of the North American market."

To meet this target, the Department of Tourism has partnered with private firms like Abenson, American Eye Center, Arts, Globe Telecom, JetDirect, the Rustic Group, Philippine Airlines and the Philippine National Bank to set up a system of inducements and rewards for tourists.

All tourists from North America are automatically enrolled the promo which will have a suite of a new Shangri-la condominium development as its grand raffle prize, Durano said.

He revealed that tourists spend an average of $98 in a day in the country, and stay anywhere between seven and 12 days.

Durano revealed that North Americans "balikbayans" are particularly attractive to the tourism department because they tend to stay in hotels rather than go home to their relatives—a habit that further fuels the tourism industry.

BORACAY's beach is one of the country's top tourist destinations.

Halal forum set to help RP food firms

By Ronnel W. Domingo

HALAL EXPERTS FROM FAMOUS MARKETS and authorities in the region will be expected to take part in international forum to be held in Makati City on June 20, aimed at enhancing the Philippines' ability to break into the global industry.

The Manila International Forum on Halal Trade and Industry would be held in the wake of the United Arab Emirates' accreditation of a Philippine halal certifier, which ensured access of local producers and exporters to the $336-billion-yearly-food industry.

Abdul Rahman Al Ujirang, president of the Islamic Da'wah Council of the Philippines, said the gathering would tackle business opportunities for halal-certified products and the mechanics of the certification process as well as experiences of companies in the market.

Halal is an Arabic word that can be generally translated as "permissible" and, in relation to consumables, refer to products that Muslims are allowed to use, eat and drink in the observance of Islam.

Organized with the help of the Jakarta-based World Halal Council (WHC), the forum is meant for manufacturers of food and non-food products, halal-certified companies and concerned business entities and government agencies involved in the halal industry here and abroad.

Among said guests would include representatives from the WHC, Islamic Food Council of Europe; Halal Food and Food Inspection Authority of Holland; halal promotion organization based in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, and halal certification authorities in Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

He explained that the forum is expected to have ensued in following through with the added accesses of Philippine efforts to serve the local market and tap the global market, particularly with the accreditation of DICP with the United Arab Emirates—considered the gateway to the lucrative Middle East market.

Ujirang said the group's accreditation ensures that Philippine-made halal products would now be acceptable not only in Middle Eastern markets but also to the rest of the world.

"The apparent success of DICP is also a success of the entire country," Ujirang said. "More than a sign of acceptability to Islamic standards, certification serves as habitat-owners that issues a proof of high quality which all kinds of markets look for."

Family-based firms prop RP's ₱118.7-B hog raising industry

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO... THE HOG RAISING industry valued at P118.7 billion in 2005 and the sector's top agricultural contributor after palay, corn sources so far sustained by family-based enterprises, a Department of Agriculture official said.

At least 76 percent of 12.2 million hogs produced last year were fattened in backyards, not in commercial farms, said Dulce Ocampo, executive director of the livestock development council, citing Bureau of Agricultural Statistics data.

Backyard production refers to an operation involving a maximum of 100 hogs, he said.

Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog raised more swine, contributing 33.73 percent and 13.04 percent, respectively, to last year's inventory.

Western Visayas emerged as a major source of hogs, increasing its share to 9.49 percent from 7.35 percent in 1980.

While stocks in backyards increased by 50 percent between 1980 and 2005, inventories in commercials for the same period grew by 166 percent.

Ocampo said the industry was thriving. Pork comprised 79 percent of the total volume of meat produced last year.

Preference for pork has risen, with per capita consumption doubling. It is 16 kilograms in 2005 from just 9 kg in 1980.

Domestic producers will dominate the industry for its pace is largely by meat processors begun yesterday in 2000.

Imports rose to 54,000 metric tons (MT) in 2004 from just 454 MT in 1985. — Sandra Hyjia, PDI Central Luzon Desk

THE CLARK International Airport is one of the prime attractions of the Clark Economic Zone, and investors are seen to stay with the expected return of tax incentives.

Clark investors cheer pro-tax perks bills

Restoration of fiscal incentives awaited

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE – Investors here said they were beginning to feel optimistic again after the House of Representatives last week approved on third reading two bills granting them tax amnesty and restoring fiscal incentives nullified by the Supreme Court in July last year.

"We're very, very happy. Things are beginning to look bright for us," Francisco Villanueva, president of the Clark Investors and Locators Association (CILA), told the Inquirer last year.

House Bill 4900 and HB 5060 were passed three months after the House committee on ways and means, chaired by Victor Ma. Andrew Lagsa, pushed the bills for plenary deliberations.

The measures evolved from Joint Resolution No. 9 that President Macapagal-Arroyo certified to the Senate and House as urgent in September 2005.

The resolution sought to confirm the legislative intent of the Bases Conversion Development Act of 1992 (Republic Act 7227) to grant tax and duty free incentives to the CDZ and other special economic zones created under Section 15 of the law.

Lasting the privilege of paying only 5 percent of gross income and limiting their pay to 25 percent in taxes cut into the interest of Clark businesses, Glu had said in previous statements.

At stake were aggregate investments of P18 billion, levies and taxes worth P600 million annually and more than 37,000 workers, Glu said.

The group said many of its members were planning to move to China or Vietnam where the cost of doing business was much lower.

Nueva Ecija business chambers supported Glu's lobby to get back their incentives.

Antonio Raffy Rocio, Richard Cruzlan, Juan Ponce Enrile and Manuel Roxas II have filed counterpart bills, big and the lawmakers have committed to undertake a "speedy to conceal conference."

Secretary Edgardo Buensuceso, head of the Subic-Clark Area Development Council, said the investment policies in Clark needed to be clarified and improved so that the economic could be fully maximized, like the Kobe Bay Prompter in Zambales and Bataan.

The Arroyo administration has marketed Subic and Clark as the best logistics hubs in Southeast Asia, connecting those via a P11-billion, 97-kilometer expressway.

The two seaports are the largest in the country with a combined area of more than 800,000 hectares and equipped with two airports.

But two groups for Subic investors were expelled in RA 7227 but not in other bases converted into industrial or tourism enclaves like Clark in Pampanga and Camp John Hay in Baguio City, the Supreme Court said in its July 20, 2005 ruling. — Sandra Hyjia, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Mutual benefits groups directed to set up fund

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INSURANCE COMMISSION has required mutual benefits associations in the country to set up a guaranty fund to cover the claims of its members.

IC Commissioner Estrogelina Escobillo directed that starting July 1, new mutual benefit associations or those seeking rehabilitation must put up an initial guaranty fund equivalent to at least 25 percent of the P120 million minimum paid-up capital required for new insurance companies.

By the end of this year, all existing mutual benefit associations must also have a minimum guaranty fund of P12.5 million, said a recent IC circular.

Escobillo explained that a mutual benefit association functions like an insurance company, but it serves the interest of its own members, like the AFP Mutual Benefits Association.

Mutual benefits associations provide for its members risk benefits, financial support while out of employment and death benefits to relatives of deceased members. The members usually belong in the less advantaged sectors.

Because of their purpose and social impact, these associations are regulated by the IC, which noted that a number of these entities had failed because of mismanagement and failure to comply with regulations.

The IC said the establishment of a guaranty fund was necessary to protect the interests of its members.

"All mutual benefit associations shall deposit with the IC the amount of guaranty fund required in cash or in government securities with a total value equal to such amount," the circular said.

The IC said it shall invest the money in government securities or in interest-bearing deposits with any financially sound commercial bank or trust entity for the account of the particular mutual benefit association that put up the guaranty fund.

Gov't seen to spend ...

From page B6

revenue might be unable to meet this year's deficit cap of P135 billion. He added that investors were also concerned about consumers from the hospike hosted up Philippine that local interest rates might be a bit hot.

"Does unfriendly economics, coupled with possible increase in government borrowing, triggered dumping of domestic debt securities," the analyst said. "What importantly result in reduce were provided by the potential capital loans since they had purchased now set investment trust funds in anticipation of higher returns than that achieved on regular deposits. — Doris C. Dumlao

Getting you ready for the world

LOCAL CULINARY EDUCATION JUST got a big boost with the opening of the first American culinary school in the Philippines at the Makati business district. The American Hospitality Academy (AHA), with more than 30 years of experience in the hospitality industry, has partnered with a Philippine management team to offer a comprehensive and practical hands-on culinary training. AHA has been designated by the US Department of State as sponsor of an Exchange Visitor Program that has provided structured training opportunities for students in the United States for 20 years now. Established in 1986 by Dedi Reiman, AHA has partnered with well-known hotel chains like the Ritz-Carlton, Hyatt, Marriott and Hilton, to name a few.

Its 8-month Diploma in Culinary Arts and 9-month Diploma in Culinary Entrepreneurship will have students experiencing internship in well-known hotels and resorts locally and internationally. The first four months will be spent in school for lectures, demo and kitchen work and the next two months in internship in a local hotel or restaurant. After that, students can opt to go for overseas internship.

The first of its kind offering a paid internship abroad, AHA Philippines hopes to give Filipino culinary students the chance to work in the best hotel and resort chains in the United States from six months to a year. AHA gives students the chance to learn and train from the leaders of industry through a program of international internship following the prestigious Sertstad Program (Service Leadership in a Multicultural Workplace). This unique internship program enables students to obtain international certification from the Educational Institute of the American Hotel and Lodging Association (EI-AHLA), the most highly recognized and most highly regarded mark of hospitality professionalism and was developed in collaboration with industry and academic partners all over the world with training students serving as ambassadors of their countries, while getting to experience diverse cultures from other students they meet. Jerks of the program include a monthly stipend or hourly pay, free accommodations to completely furnished and comfortable apartments, daily transportation service to training sites and the option to pursue an international professional certification from the EI-AHLA.

The school is presently processing applicants for the June 2006 intake. Be one of the first to experience a practical culinary adventure that will secure your future in the hospitality industry. Getting you ready for the world is just the twenty-first century.

AHA Philippines is located at 108 Aguirre Building, 8V dela Costa corner Tordesillas Streets, Salcedo Village, Makati City. For inquiries, call 0730-8310, e-mail [illegible] or log on to www.ahaphil.com.

TOTAL DISMATEL TO SOUTHERN LEYTE REHAB

For every liter of gasoline purchased from Feb. 15 to March 3, Total (Philippines) Corp. donated 25 centavos to the landslide victims of Southern Leyte through the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC). Shown during the turnover of the check and some of goods donated by Total customers are (from left) Bong Lawsin, Total retail business manager; Arsol Wilkinson, Total president and managing director; Sen. Richard Gordon, PNRC chair; and Glenn Pang, PNRC director for fund donation.

ISRAELI FIRM INVESTS IN NORTHGATE CYBERZONE

Cyber Icons Properties Inc. (CPI) recently signed an investment agreement with Mivtal Israel Investments (Philippines) Inc. by which Africa Israel will become a shareholder of up to 40 percent of CPI, the proceeds from this partnership will be used to finance the construction of additional buildings and other facilities at the Northgate Cyberzone Information Technology park in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang. One of Israel's largest companies, Africa Israel is a conglomerate with worldwide investments in residential real estate, shopping malls, energy, fashion, telecommunication and media, and infrastructure. Its shares are listed in the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange in Israel. More details will soon be held in Southern Metro Manila. Bar I & J Venture Northgate Cyberzone is a Pinoy-registered IT park which is developed by CPI. Northgate Cyberzone has a Building 7&7 reputation with five existing buildings and some 12 companies currently operating in the zone.

ProductFILES

New tamarind candy

GRAB A PACK OF MORENGOLD CHERRY Tamarind Candy and savor the authentic taste of Thai Tamarind candy. This unique tasting candy is made from fresh tamarind and prepared according to the authentic Thai recipe. It's a treat that the whole family will enjoy. Morengold Cherry Tamarind candy is available in all SM Supermarket, Robinsons Supermarket, Rustan Supercenter, Shopwise, Mini Stop convenience store and other leading stores. Morengold Cherry Tamarind Candy is exclusively distributed by Hearth Food Products (111-2307).

Bits & Clips

'Perfectly amazing' deal

A/C, SMART AND MITSUBISHI HAVE LAUNCHED "A Perfectly Amazing Deal" promo. Buyers of any 1" 1500 watts, 2½" (900 watts) or 3½" (675 watts) A/C Del '71 can get the new Mitsubishi C139 software phone for only P499, with a free Smart Load Buddy prepaid SIM and a TV-pack to boot. Every purchase of A/C C'71 models entitles buyers to one promo voucher, which must be presented along with the sales invoice and valid identification to get the Mitsubishi C139 for just P499 from any Smart Wireless Center nationwide. The promo is ongoing until June 30 and will apply to cash and installment purchases.

Fuji Xerox promo

FUJI XEROX PHILIPPINES (FXP), THE WORLD-wide leader in printing innovation and document-management printing technology, launches the "Fuji Xerox After Summer Photo Contest 2006", which runs only until June 1. The contest is open to professional and amateur photo enthusiasts aged 18 years and over alike. To join, just send in your "one-of-a-kind" original summer photos with the proper caption to faxdevcontest@gmail.com. No purchase is necessary. Deadline for submission of entries is 12 noon of June 1. There is no limit to the number of entries one can send, but a contest participant may only win once. The winning entries will be announced on June 10, with the top 10 entries receiving P1,000 worth of Lolo Cebagoofits gift certificates. For more information, call American Technologies Inc at 123-2600.

Autodesk Solution Day

AUTODESK INC. MINDSHELF TAAI (TS #8863A) conference platform, Autodesk Solution Day, will be held on June 8 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Now into its 4th year, it will showcase new technologies and best practices aimed at helping local designers in the manufacturing, mapping, civil engineering, building, construction, media and entertainment industries bring great ideas into reality sooner. Themed "Accelerate Your Ideas", Autodesk Solution Day 2006 will bow the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia. Registration for Autodesk Solution Day is free at http://asean.autodesk.com/installsday. Delegates will receive attractive door gifts, and see grand screen over P300,000 worth of lucky draw prizes such as laptops, digital cameras and MP3 players.

'Boom!' with a passion

IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL TIME—AND TIME TO prepare some healthy lunchbox treats for your kids! The best base is not only nutritious and quick to prepare, but also fun and easy to eat. To help parents meet the challenge of preparing the right school lunch and snack foods, Oscar-Argentina, the culinary chef of Pacific Meat Company Inc (PMCI), lets homemakers discover the many innovative recipes that kids will certainly love! Brought to "Lunchbox Attack" lifestyle class on June 7, 2 to 4 p.m. at the Century Culinary Circle, Unit 102 of Griggs Bonsai Building, Corigao Street corner, Bonifacio Highway, Pasig City. For more information on Cooking Argentina's lifestyle class themes and schedules, call 621-1328 or e-mail oscmac.gemmo@yahoo.com.

CLASSIFIEDS

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **Supply and Delivery of Sports Utility Vehicle (4x4) Pick-up:**

Vehicle Type	Units	Approved Budget	Cost of Bid Documents
"Four wheel-drive twin or quad cabin type 4x4 Pick-up double cab variants with heavy duty chassis and body. Engine with displacement of 2800 cc. but not exceeding 3000 cc. Turbo intercooled diesel, 5 speed M/T. Power Steering, Alloy wheels with 15 pcs. spare tire with nylon lock. Body fitted with roll bar, skid tray, side step, MP3 with DVD, 6/6 Power features (door/windows), illuminated interior/ exterior features equipped. Safety features with airbag. Multi directional Fog lamps and Security features equipped with remote keyless entry with alarm. Side step board, Headset (Bluetooth), Navigator (Portable), Airconditioning System with multiple vents, standard seats, 4X4/10 stereo speakers with CD player. Two years warranty (1 year) Free LTO registration, assorted clothing, ESD, and cover."	5	P 1,980,000.00	P 5,000.00

"Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening."

Expected Date of Delivery: August 2006
Schedule of Activities:

Particulars	Date	Venue
Pre-Bidding Conference	June 21, 2006 (Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m.	6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals	10 a.m. before 9:00 a.m. of July 5, 2006 (Thursday)	Bids Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals (Prospective Bidders are encouraged to attend this activity)	July 5, 2006 (Thursday) at 10:30 a.m.	6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines and **must be authorized by the Board**. Only Bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall undergo post-qualification steps in order to finally determine the compliance of the bid's technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification procedures.

Interested parties may download these forms at www.dbp.ph/bid.asp and at the Electronic Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management. Prospective bidders may secure the bid documents and Eligibility Requirement forms from the BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 5,000.00.

The Bank reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract to any bidder prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call telephone numbers 8 5207 000 local loc. 3512.

Bids and Awards Committee

PHILIPPINE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS NAVAL LOGISTICS CENTER
Fort San Felipe, Cavite City

12 June 2006

INVITATION TO BID

The Philippine Navy is inviting interested proponent to purchase this public bidding on 'as is where is basis' the following condemnable equipment, materials, vehicles and assorted scrap:

Nomenclature	Location	Date/Time		Price of Application Form
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline for Submission/ Opening of Bids	
Lot 1 Unserviceable Assorted Equipment and Materials **(NNSY-PN-006-06)**	Naval Logistics Center, FSF, Cavite City	9:00 AM June 07, 2006 (Wednesday)	9:00 AM June 14, 2006 (Wednesday)	Php 500.00
Lot 2 Assorted Scrap Iron, Galvanizing, STS, Metal, Electrical/Electronic Spare parts **(NNSY-PN-005-06)**	Naval Logistics Center, FSF, Cavite City			Php 500.00
Lot 3 Unserviceable and Un-Operationality 30,480 Nos **(NNSY-PN-004-06)**	Naval Petroleum Depot, Sangley Pt., Cavite City			Php 500.00
Lot 4 Fishing Boat (FB-303) **(NNSY-PN-010-06)**	Base of MNSSC, FSF, Cavite City			Php 500.00
Lot 5 Fishing Boat (FB01) **(NNSY-PN-009-06)**	Base of MNSSC, FSF, Cavite City			Php 500.00
Lot 6 One (1) unit Amphibious Small Craft, FB Calayan **(NNSY-PN-011-06)**	Base of MNSSC, FSF, Cavite City	9:00 AM June 07, 2006 (Wednesday)	9:00 AM June 14, 2006 (Wednesday)	Php 500.00
Lot 7 Ex-BRP Corregidor (PS-50) **(NNSY-PN-008-06)**	Base of MNSSC, FSF, Cavite City			Php 500.00
Lot 8 Two (2) units Amphibious Small Craft, LTM-1870 (TM-370) **(NNSY-PN-008-06)**	Base of MNSSC, FSF, Cavite City			Php 500.00

All interested proponents are advised to attend the Pre-Bid meeting on June 07, 2006 aboard Multi-Purpose Hall, Naval Sea System Command (NSSC) (Bldg), Fort San Felipe, Cavite City.

For other particulars, please contact the Secretariat, Philippine Navy Disposal Committee (PNDC) at Naval Logistics Center, Fort San Felipe, Cavite City or call (046) 431-0204.

FOR THE CHAIRMAN, PNDC:

(Sgd.) **IGOR EULOGIO PUTTERA PN**
Secretariat, PNDC

PR: June 5, 12 & 19, 2006

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Lito Luz Magno

Intel dreams of digital content in RP

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

THE HOME entertainment system has a converged future

A PC THAT CAN STREAM MUSIC wirelessly, play DVDs in a home theater environment with the use of an infrared controller and even work in a TV and record shows on a preset schedule straight out of the cable service. The PC itself is no bigger than a shoebox box and could just itself off as a pretty one.

Intel's dream of a digital home is nearly complete especially as the company's original design manufacturing partners are integrating new Intel Renesas Technology processors in some of the world's smallest desktop computer form factors. Some of these PCs can serve more as a media multimedia entertainment system as well as for business purposes.

In addition, the Microsoft Windows Media Center operating system allows full control of a computer without the need to a mouse and keyboard so even non-technical people could use the PC for watching TV while browsing the Internet or checking e-mail.

But while Intel and some of its partners provide the hardware that makes digital lifestyle possible, where is the content that will draw people into fully embracing digital entertainment? In most cases, these small form factor PCs would still do the same simple things that these bigger brethren do such as browsing the Internet, downloading, playing video games or burning optical media.

Intel Microelectronics Philippines Country Manager Shelly Bunag said that they are in talks with some content providers in the Philippines for the digital content. Though he did not specify which companies those were, he said Intel aims to complete the overall digital home cycle by creating an environment where content developers and providers would interact offering digital content to the market.

"It's also a good way for people to start browsing from our Web. They know there's rich content available for them on the Internet, they'll move out of dial-up and get broadband connection (sooner)," Bunag said.

Moving digital content on the Internet is also a chance for telecommunications companies to expand their broadband services, which could push down prices as demand increases.

"Intel would always go for digital content because that is where the future is going," Bunag said.

USAID group drafting new RP ICT roadmap

Erwin Oliva
INQ7.net

THE ECONOMIC MODERNIZATION through Efficient Reforms and Governance Advancement Strategy, a United States agency for International Development (USAID) -funded group, is helping draft the new strategic roadmap for the Philippine information and communications technology industry, a government official said.

The new ICT roadmap will update the old roadmap developed by the defunct Information Technology and Economics Council in 2000, said Ramon Salas, chair of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology.

The new Philippine ICT roadmap, which is a "consolidated" document, is scheduled to be presented publicly Monday to private sector and government stakeholders.

Speaking before the US-Asean Business Council, the CICT chair said that the new draft ICT roadmap will push more citizen-centric government services; will support a policy wherein government will be the facilitator of ICT development in the country; and promote the idea of ICT as a tool for sustainable development, among others.

It will also promote the development of more digital content in government to give local citizens access to information important to them.

The draft ICT roadmap will also push for the nationwide rollout of agencies' wide-bandwidth to bring, according to Salas.

"CICT needs to transform itself into a strong organization to facilitate development," he added.

CICT is currently overseeing the telecommunication activities of the Telecommunications Office (Telof).

Telof currently employs close to 5,000 people spread across 117 regions in the country, the official said.

Salas said that the rationalization program is offering retirement packages to employees who would voluntarily retire, while some will be realigned to other agencies.

He said that this rationalization program intends to reduce the headcount of Telof to at least 1,000, whom the CICT will absorb.

"We're not losing 'em," Salas stressed, assuring that all government employees affected by the ongoing rationalization will not be forced to leave.

Salas said that Telof employees will undergo a reassessment of skills to determine where CICT could best fit them.

Some employees will go to the maintenance of the Telof network, while others will be realigned to other agencies or deployed to other government projects, he added.

US wants ICT department created, says CICT chair

By Erwin Oliva
INQ7.net

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT wants the Philippines to have a Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), according to Ramon Salas, chair of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT) in a briefing with reporters.

Salas revealed his recent discussions with US representatives who reiterated that the Philippines is not one of many countries in the Southeast Asian region that has no single government body overseeing activities in the ICT industry.

Citing data through the Executive Order 269, the CICT currently exists as an interim body to the planned Department of Information and Communications Technology.

The House of Representatives has a pending bill seeking the creation of the DICT.

Salas said two issues have emerged with regard to the creation of this ICT super body. The first involves the need to create the department to assess the control and growth of the local high-tech industry led by the booming business process outsourcing (BPO) industry.

"It's necessary to elevate the CICT to a DICT so that the contributions of the ICT to the country's economy will be assured?" Salas posed the question.

Despite the absence of the planned ICT department, the Philippine BPO industry has generated as much $1.1 billion in revenues in 2006 alone. It is expected to grow to $22.5 billion in 2010, the government official said.

On the sales end, Salas views the DICT as an important factor in integrating all government ICT activities and infrastructure.

"The real mission of the DICT is to integrate ICT in government," he added.

Since 1998, lawmakers have tried to push for measures to create the DICT but have failed.

Under former CICT chair Virgilio Peña, the proposed department was revived while several lawmakers, in particular Representative Salacnib Baterina, who is now chair of House ICT committee, have re-authored bills to support the bid to create the government body.

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Republic of the Philippines

PURCHASE OF VARIOUS VEHICLES

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Construction Management (CM) Consultancy Services for the BSP Museum Building in Intramuros

BUSINESS Monday

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

Business Features Editor Margie Quiroga Espino

Good writing builds good business

Gurus list 10 characteristics of effective business letters

By Edna Flor M. delos Santos
Contributor

WHAT WILL YOU DO IF YOU RECEIVE A LETTER that reads: "Your failure to remit your annual payment on your life insurance policy as of this date leaves us no other recourse but to consider taking drastic action against you." Upon receiving that letter, my lady friend gave the insurance agency manager a taste of a scorned woman's fury. She dared him to do just what he said he would do in his letter. She was ready to give soon. Its offended she was that she thought of terminating her relationship with this insurance agency.

This exclusive letter has drugstore written all over it, which reduces the trustworthiness of the agency.

Its information was incorrect (the lady paid her premium on time); the tone was characterless; it was not addressed although it uses the process "you"; it was wordy (there is no echo in economy); grammar is flawed (uses base instead of lower), the subject "failure" being singular), and it was tactless and vague (what drastic action?).

That is received a negative response from the reader would not surprise seasoned letter writers who are aware of the rules of writing effective business letters.

How many business opportunities are ruined because of badly-written correspondence?

Effective communication, whether written or oral, builds good business. Well-written letters will produce. But more than that, they sell the company's name.

Aware of the impact on business of effective writing, employers in other countries and in the Philippines spend large sums of money to train their employees on writing that produces results.

Business writing gurus say there are 10 characteristics of effective business letters.

1. CONCISENESS. Conveying the message in the fewest number of words and sentences as possible. Brevity is the rule of thumb.

"If your letter can't be read and understood in less than 20 seconds, it has failed," theory of success. It used to be 30—this time limit gets shorter every year," one expert said.

To achieve this, the writer must eliminate wordy and trite expressions. Simple and easy-syllable words are packed with the same power as three-syllable words or phrases.

Also, the active voice gives the letter the vitality it needs to deliver the message forcefully.

2. CLARITY. As a writer, you hit bull's eye if your reader understands what you have to say. Precise and familiar words are the tricks to your bag. Jargon, slang and colloquialisms serve no purpose because they cause confusion.

For example, the jargon "apologize" conveys different meanings to "set" reader wisdom (stolen vegetables or leaks) and to the airline industry (empty seats). When it comes to sentence length, no matter how inspired you are, don't go beyond 20 words.

3. CONSIDERATION of the readers' interest, needs and circumstances. It is writing from their point of view and how they will benefit from the content of the message. The customer will appreciate the change in policy better if the benefits of such a change are personalized.

4. COMPLETENESS is presenting in the letter all the facts that the reader needs, to make a sound decision on your message. One way to economy the 5 Ws and 1H questions.

For instance, to order a refrigerator, make clear what model, size and color you want, when you need it, to whom and where it will be sent, why you have chosen that company.

(MORE BELOW)

BALDNESS:
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Jamaal Aguayo, Dentist

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With a lot of help from BPI Family Savings Bank, Sally San Jose of Davao City discovered the perfect recipe for a successful restaurant and catering business.

All Mrs. Sally dela Cruz San Jose wanted was to have a small business that would give her time to personally take care of her children. With her talent, creativity and passion for cooking, she got what she wanted... and so much more.

"I opened a carinderia in front of our rented apartment in 1986. We called it Chippens. Dahil sa word of mouth, my eatery became popular", Mrs. San Jose happily recalled. It was the start of something big. She ventured into the catering business in 1990, and it became successful.

The economic crisis in 1998 was a big hurdle in the growth of her business. Expansion was put to a halt. But in 2002, she finally decided to avail of a BPI Family Savings Bank Grow Your SME Business Loan.

"As my surprise, it offered affordable rates and easy terms. It gave me back my confidence to grow my business", she continues. With the loan granted to her, she was able to finally expand Chippens to a 250-seater buffet restaurant in Roxas Ave., Davao.

"Taking taking ng BPI Family Savings Bank sa Chippens", Mrs. San Jose said, as she proudly scanned her huge restaurant teeming with satisfied customers.

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For more information, call 754-6000 or 89-100. Log on to www.bpiexpressonline.com or visit any BPI or BPI Family Savings Bank branch or Express Banking Center near you.

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Corporate governance at the PSE

WE CANNOT JUST PAY LIP SERVICE to the good corporate governance, because our ability to bring in more investments to the stock market, the ability of these investments to open new or additional industries, for these industries to create new jobs in Bacolod, all depend on how we are able to attract economic growth, all of those will depend in a way on improvements in OUR good corporate governance issue.

I remember that almost a year ago — our respected chair of the Securities Exchange Executive Director, Dr. Jesus Romualdez, released the results of a survey, which was conducted by Det-CED and the Capitol Market Development Council or CMDC.

While I was preparing this presentation, we received a Credit Research Report from Philippine Equity Partners, Inc. Based on that, they ...Indeed has been my intent.

It was about the relationship between the four listed companies that topped the good corporate governance survey and their performance in the stock market.

Dr. Romualdez said, and I quote: "We have found a positive relationship, but I must emphasize that as required that positive relationship is small. But if it is there, and our task now the next few years is to build on it and make it all that much more significant." End of quote.

SMALL. That was the observation that Dr. Romualdez made last year, but today and gradually, I have reason to believe that Dr. Romualdez said all of us have need not wait for a long, long time for good governance to make, are going to find a SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE in the market performance of listed companies that adopted significantly effective good corporate governance.

I asked our research department to look into the performance of those companies that topped the survey last year. Let me caution you all that what we did was just a cursory survey, which still requires further study, but offhand, I have some interesting information to share with you all.

Our research people extracted the prices of Ayala Land, SM, Bank of the Philippine Islands and PLDT last year as well as in the first quarter of this year, and here are the results.

The stock prices of three of the four firms went up by more than 20 to 30 percent or more than double the average increase of the index for 2005.

Person, which closed at P1.28 a share in 2004, went up to P4.50 in 2005 or by 251 percent, which was the highest rate of growth in price among the four reviewed companies last year.

They are here Ayala Land. Its price closed at P7.80 a share in 2004 and advanced by 35.6 percent to P9.80 last year.

SM Prime Holdings, Inc.

RP tech firms out to conquer Asian markets

By Roonad N. Dayrit

"WAP TEXTA KA NA DA?"

It's a catchphrase that, while not yet a byword among local cell phone users, two trailblazing entrepreneurs want to hear uttered in other languages across the globe.

TeMA is a mobile Internet application that allows cell phone users to enjoy PC-style instant messaging with their text messaging gadgets.

Short from that, TeMA allows users to cancel messages that were sent to the wrong people or needed to be changed.

Wilfredo A. dela Cruz, president of ID Systems Inc., explains that through www.pxtma.com, cell phone users could schedule the sending of text messages or recall them after having been sent.

Dela Cruz, who has extensive experience in working for a telecommunications giant like PLDT as well as start-ups similar to ID Systems, is half of the duo that founded the so-called "personal network integrating" which focuses on the user-level needs.

The other is Bogie Delgado, who, according to ID Systems, is responsible for laying out the initial technical foundation that made the country's texting capital of the world.

TeMA, which can be downloaded for free, was launched in 2003 and packaged as a tool that would let instant messaging regulars chat with their mobile phones as they do with Yahoo!, MSN or similar applications.

Delgado, the firm's chief technology officer, explains that TeMA stands for "peer-to-peer tech and business access."

"TeMA is perfect for long conversations," Delgado says. "And you can chat person-to-person, or join a text conference or a chatroom and talk with people all over the world."

With TeMA, one can chat for an hour or so with loved ones abroad while taking in a bus on the way to work," Delgado adds. "One can even join a conference chat with friends or business associates around the world while walking in a mall."

Dela Cruz says they are hoping TeMA to the global market through the CommunAsia 2006, an exhibition for the information and communications technology industry that would be held in Singapore on June 20-23.

"We want to introduce a new mobile experience, new product concepts and additional features to traditional Short Messaging Service and (Instant messaging," he says.

Dela Cruz says ID Systems plans to showcase text conferencing features in the trade fair. With an activation rate of P2, mobile phone users can get in touch in real time with new or more parties, just like in chatrooms.

But beyond that, users can also download special release through the network, which are then be used on buy items.

Mobile gaming is also a possibility on the WiMA network since ID Systems is developing multi-user games to capitalize on the communities that would be formed.

The network currently supports Nokia 6600, 6681, 3220, 3650, 6260, 3630, 7610, 6620, 6600 as well as 7260, 6068, 6111, 6270, 6280, 6600, 3650, 6260, 6302, 6108, 6630, 7268, 7270 and 3220.

Through these units—and locally through any operator that offers GPRS—users can access popular public IM networks such GoogleTalk aside from the firm's own WiMA network.

Mobile alerts are provided so that users are informed when another device or PC is trying to communicate with one's mobile device or when one's contacts become available to talk to on WiMA.

Other features in the pipeline include "Push-to-Talk" or the ability to send voice messages over the Internet, storing applications such as ringtones, games and advertisements online, support for 3G or 3G1/2 and access to corporate e-mail, corporate applications and databases.

The leader-coach

IN THE COMEDY, WHAT ABOUT BOB, Bill Murray plays the character of Bob Wiley, a neurotic man with every conceivable fear and insecurity. Looking for help, Bob calls upon renowned psychiatrist, Dr. Leo Marvin. Dr. Marvin shares with Bob the secrets of his new book, Baby Steps, and tracks with Bob on a plan to cure him of his phobias.

Grateful for Dr. Marvin's insights, Bob leaves the office with a newfound optimism.

However, his quest unveils soon reverse, and it becomes clear that the motivations of Bob's health demands more personalized instruction. Bob's optimism is an instinctive mental ego-ploy to him.

Bob circles insincere to walk with him step by step to recovery. His anxiety and needy ness drive him to crack down the fulcrum Dr. Marvin's family vacation.

The ensuing antics between the needy patient and the self-important psychiatrist form the basis of this comedy.

While Bob is an exaggerated caricature compared to a normal worker, his hopes in Dr. Leo Marvin have merit in expressing the qualities followers seek to find in a leader-coach.

First, employees want a leader-coach who is willing to intentionally spend time with them. Bob, they are searching for more than rote knowledge—they are looking for a leader-coach to aid their development.

Finally, they want to be involved in content-oriented issues they are challenged to grow.

In a recent article adapted Tom Hunter Ting and Peter Scisco's work, The CEL Handbook of Coaching: A Guide for the Leader Coach, the Center for Creative Leadership breaks down the basic characteristics of the leader-coach.

Leader-coaches are intentional

Leader-coaches strategically spend time discovering the strengths, weaknesses, goals, and values of those they lead. With an accurate picture of an employee's dreams and desires, the leader can coach the individual in areas which appeal to the employee's internal motivations.

Aside from the benefit of understanding an employee, a leader-coach honours value and importance by intentionally giving attention to those under his care.

When employees feel anonymous they atrophy, but when they feel appreciated they tend to respond by giving their best efforts.

Leader-coaches focus on performance and development.

Whereas in the past leaders primarily looked toward productivity and results, today leaders must place great importance on developing their personnel.

With a highly mobile workforce of growth-focused employees, leaders cannot afford to treat employees as cogs in a machine.

Workers want to expand their skills sets in addition to being part of a successful team, and if they're not being developed, they'll soon be departing.

As employees expecting growth opportunities will be more likely to offer loyalty and commitment to organizational performance.

Leader-coaches take a systemic perspective

While leaders may take interest in individual employees, leader-coaches see their role as creating a culture of leadership growth.

Such leaders tailor tasks to present new and strategic challenges to those they mentor.

Leader-coaches, in tandem with employees, may make a habit of scheduling extended learning experiences with the purpose of highlighting the growth within their tasks or departments.

A leader-coach with enthusiasm for personal and team development initiates a contagious climate in which growth is sought after and prized.

To learn more about leader-coaches, visit the Centre for Creative Leadership at www.ccl.org

For information on John Maxwell's future or public leadership or teamwork workshops, please email us at maxwell@inquire.ph or call 813-2732-93 and ask for Jen or Bing. Text MAXWELL ON to 4632 (Smart) to get daily (8¢) leadership insights from John Maxwell. God bless!

FRENCH chamber concert wows Manila /C2

LIFESTYLE
Editor Chelo Batail-Formoso

The Philippine entries to the recent Theater Olympics of the Nations ranged from the high-brow to the 'halo-halo'

SCENE from "Something to Crow About," directed by Cecile Guidote Alvarez

Cocks, corals and criminals

By Gloria Cacle

ONE OF THE VERY FIRST times to open "Something to Crow About," the recent translated staging of Alejandro Roces' short stories on cockfighting, was, "Any material that showcases the greatness of the Filipino is good material."

The musical encapsulated that sensibility to a tee and radically so (for up to the denouement. As staged by Cecile Guidote Alvarez in the Emilio Aguinaldo College auditorium before an audience that included the Unesco director general Koichiro Matsuura, pack-a-bar cultural diplomats from all over the world, "Something to Crow About" rammed into its hour-and-a-half run a cockfight, a fiesta, a court hearing, a Sen-

tacticism, an entire town band, some artsy cocktail, about 15 songs sung by more than 20 characters, a gaggle of dancers and actors, and even film footage.

The outcome of the gigantic theatrical halo-halo was a bright, sugary parfe of a musical that was also feisty and unconventional. Because it had to make way for one song after the other, one storyline after—billed as a musical for more like Broadway—and unexpectedly funny lyrics were by firebrand Columnist, the final text was a shallow, here-brave story of Roces' stories on cockfighting and their insights into the pecking order and gender arrangements of traditional Filipino society.

Cielito Reyes, a National Artist for Literature, would claim credit for the libretto, for instance, it's safe to assume that Dimabuyo

COCKS Cl

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DOMINIQUE Plamondon on piano and Nemanja Radulovic on violin

Chamber concert l
French Spring in M

By Antonio C. Ma
Contributor

A HIGHLIGHT OF THE CELEBRATION of French Spring in Manila 2006 was a chamber concert that fused the collaborative artistry of violinist Nemanja Radulovic and pianist Dominique Plamondon in an all-session concert for violin and piano recently at the Philamlife Theater.

It was Radulovic's third time to perform in Manila, which only means Mister Manila means musical triumph admen brain.

Star-without reason. Apart from his youthful disposition, he can a debonair master on stage, and performs with choreographic grace. More important is the final, the sensitive elegance that wraps his entire rendition into the symmetry of big issues.

This is not to say that the duo carved a tiny musical fretboard their teeth over bath and sensitive, just amply matched for their program, fired by keen virtuosity.

The collaboration was great because both artists were of equal calibre. Presence was not a singular but a collective attribute. The pianist matched the caliber of the violinist, and both played with equal footing, so to speak, making listening in chamber music truly pleasurable.

They etched an ensemble of a balanced give-and-take, and kept the stylistic tradition of tasteful group playing.

Above all, the intimacy with which they bound their playing was impressible.

This impression was gleaned at once in the opening number of Mozart's Sonata in G Major, one of the many sonatas for violin and piano Mozart had written.

Virtuosity and clarity

Individual virtuosity did not eschew the clarity of the piece. The rendition kept the spontaneity of the piece, the flowing grace unfolding from the charming melodies, which is the essence of the work.

The interpretation avoided personal appropriation, but kept the classical tradition of unity of form and content. The musicians avoided forced out notes, but moved out just the right intensity to come up with a firm, spanking timbre.

The Mozart number was well-received, and, for sure, it was a fitting homage to the composer whose 250th birth anniversary is celebrated the world over.

A direct contrast to Mozart was the somber Schoenam Sonata No. 1 in A Minor, which the earliest program notes listed as a Brandy "sonata in-le." Here, the duo etched their vow fully, underlining the world's rich and heavy texture. The give-and-take was again commendable, and the pianist seamlessly cast in the dialogue with the violinist.

Grieg's Sonata No. 3 in C Minor, Opus 45, again simply listed as "Sonata No. 3," brought out the quintessence of the duo's artistry fusion. The work is a masterpiece wasted by Grieg, the "Chopin o

FRENCH cultural attaché Philippe Saland, Claude Cantel and Maria Targos

FRENCH press attaché Camille Lacau and columnist Rambida Ortoza

AXA-Philamlife, Panseurs president and CEO Robert d'Abeville and Phoris Cuillion

Cocks, corals and criminals

From page 61

ocean's breathing the same literary oxygen where he actually dubbed one of his songs "The Hand Lens Travelled By" Or where he inflicted those lines on the chorus:

"He's sorky 'bout his cock he wants me to handle

Like the Washington Monument—like 19 Cleopatra's needle"

In a less inhibited period, Beers' double-entendres ("He's a bore sucker!," said a character) would sound witty and sophisticated, to winking advice an invitation to gentle subversion. Here, the earthier cock-y wordplay ("I've never met a man so obsessed with his nads We'll handle it, he'll fondle it around the clock") seem achieved the liberating heights of two bawdiness, only a flat, trivial rubbish.

Good thing the performers were far bigger than the material. To a man (or woman), the huge cast that included Lionel Cadiao, Anni Bilbao, Joel Trinidad, Liezl Ramos Crooking, a rare foray outside Repertory Philippines's Trianc Rafferty, Bong Enriquez, Cynthia Culig-Castro, Dean Cristal and Eugene de los Santos were at the top of their form. With universal pride in make, these actors elevated their middling songs and haphazard characters with music-hall singing and acting—never mind the production's oversalted sound mix.

Overcoming the odds with grit and brazen—even, that was the greatness of the Filipino showcased.

'Shooting the Boys'

Like Canap's Dramatis Personae worked into the Theater Olympics of the Nations with "Shooting the Boys," a positively drawn study of how poverty and crime (in this case, pedophilia) feed off each other in symbiotic ways.

Canap's play, a finalist during the 1990 University of Exeter Playwriting Competition in England, pastured to roads, unblinkingly confronts the stories the fictionalized story of John Harvey (Dorian Patrick), a fictional actor who "drew into crowds as part

SCENE from Anton Juan's "Shadows of the Reef"

of a Greek Sorrin mode and chose to overstay in Pagsanjan, Laguna, where he maintained a stable of poor kids (often abetted by desperate parents) for his and his clients' sexual favors. He was eventually deported for his crimes.

As a document of a sordid social reality, "Shooting the Boys" was affecting and eye-opening.

"You are my wife. You are my son. We are my wife and son," said Harvey, addressing his kept boy Cabo. The line, pregnant with terrifying implications, echoed Pete Dexter's's chronicle, pedophile novel Paris in Russian Polanski's "Chinatown." "She's my sister. She's my daughter. She's my sister AND daughter!"

However, as a window into its characters' compromised hearts, the play could stand more illumination. Having an achievably diverse characters, violently by seeing from leering predator to self-pitying manhood ("I'm going to hell," he moaned at one point to Cabo) to the bleak of no eye. One would think a middle-aged, borderline ugly guy who abused children and their parents would also have an ounce of charm to lessen his naked monetary offerings with. This one didn't.

Most tellingly, Canap's naturalistic play was dulled by the fact that his actors couldn't act. Patrick's whiny acting about his role, moreso more non-impersonation at best. The very young, obviously non-actors playing the two boys were even more unconvincing.

Take this play out of its one workshop environment and it could stand a chance of truly making a statement.

'Shadows of the Reef'

Real setting also hobbled Anton Juan's new play, "Shadows of the Reef," a collaboration between the playwright-director's modern worldshoppers and the all-Ilonga Theater Co. of Iloilo, which provided the atmospheric live soundtrack to this tale of death, punishment and redemption in a timeless fishing village.

Anyone familiar with Juan's lifelong affinity for the Greek aesthetic in his thematic works would know that, like Greek filmmaker Theo Angelopoulos ("Ulysses' Gaze"), he is concerned less often with fine-grained character identities and more narratives than with imposing, ritually-oriented stages-all that transcends particularized portraitures and, instead, aims for a world (and—or instead) up—by ritual, destiny, fate, a whimsical cosmos.

In this sense, weak acting by a cast betting by psychological depth and—don't-plate would be the least of his worries. And not was with "Shadows of the Reef," a powerfully theatrical tale on man's eternal fishing and the related exploitation of children by its practitioners.

Set in Iloilo, one of hundreds from downtown islands employed by Japanese ships to dive and drive out tubeads of fish from coral reefs, is trapped in the vast sea plunging downward. His mother, overcome with grief, spends into self-destructive behavior, relocating herself to drinking fishermen and begging the horrified Spanish priest to exorcise her during Holy Week.

THE COCKFIGHT scene in "Something to Crow About," using National Artist Daniel Lorenzo Ortoza Gaspingpin's choreography

DRAMATIS Personae's Lito Casapa dressing Doctor Patrick in "Shooting the Boys"

To illustrate the boy's death, Juan staged a heavens sequence employing eerie African chants, Euphoria blasts and shadowy lighting. The ensemble of young actors, rolling close-ups on the face like floating flowers, slowly was lowed to become writhing coral reefs. In the scene planning the boy swims among them, a net slowly descended on the tableau. The boy kicked and gasped, kicked and gasped, until darkness swallowed the image.

The tragedy, repeating itself soon enough, would have the village to come to terms with the wages of the mercenary evil haunting their waters.

Juan, over the proscenium, stayed above to stop them, however. In the finale, the ensemble, lighted like ghosts on the bare black stage of Tanghalang Ensemble, danced, and the net above drew heads. Then, without warning, they climbed up the bleachers, right in between members of the startled audience.

Gee Real Inglorio Nina Jaime the one dropped on the heads of the spectators. Tender.

E-mail the author or gmail@inquirer.com.ph

Enrico Labayen show

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY, HYBRID AR collaborative performance between th Philippines and Australia titled "Foreign nations... Against Reduction" will b staged June 9, 8 p.m., and June 10-11, p.m., at the CCP Floreng Bonpo as pa of the ongoing International Theate Festival. It dwells on the real-life battl of HIV-AIDS victims. Guest performers are renowned international choreographer Enrico Labayen and media ar specialist Vicenta Parreno. Call 832 12 local 1606-1607.

LABAYEN in action

Chorus Philippines at Paco Park Presen

CHORUS PHILIPPINES rendition well-loved folk songs and patriotic anthems is a special concert, "Philippine Portraits," at Paco Park Presents on June 9, 8 p.m.

The show, which marks the country's 108th Independence Day, features National Artist Lucrecia Kasilag's "Parlala si Ydiwah," some classical arrangements of well-loved folk songs, and stirring patriotic so

Chorus Philippines composed of church choirs, teams, young pr schools and music stude it is currently recording the CD album of Filip folk and contemp songs arranged by its ol master, Jes Y. Sibi.

Paco Park is at Marcelino and Padre B Herrera, Paco, Manila. admission is free.

highlights Manila

PRESS attaché Camille Lanot, Alliance Francaise de Manille director Olivier Blanzaco and First Secretary Alain Portes

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MARCEL Carné's "Les Enfants du Paradis" (Children of Paradise), 1945

ABDELLATIF Kechiche's "L'esquive" (Games of Love and Chance), 2003

Major French filmmaker to present latest work at French Spring in Manila

JEAN Becker's "Nouvelle France" (New France), 2004

MAGGIE Cheung in Olivier Assayas' "Clean," 2004

PIERRE Schoendoerffer's "La Haut," 2001

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By Constantine C. Tejero

"IN FRANCE, CINEMA HAS NEVER BEEN merely a mode of entertainment but rather a source of expression. The passion elicited by the cinema in France are those sparked by painting, music, literature, theatre and governance, and the inspiring notion, as explored by the talents on the screen, we're never film with the aim: we're they write about other fresh disciplines."

Thus Laurence Engida explains the passion out in his introduction to "Best of 50 Years: Selections from the French Film Journal."

Taking that viewing seriously, the French have been running the oldest annual foreign film festival in the country. Grateful Filipino moviegoers have acquired a taste for French films that the festival has also become one of the most popular in Manila.

It is now a regular feature of French living in Manila, the annual cultural event put up by the Embassy of France, the Alliance Française de Manille and the Association Française d'Action Artistique.

The 12th French Film Festival runs June 8-18 at the Cinemas of Shangri-la Plaza Mall, Edsa cor. Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City. As in previous years, a generous mixture, poetry, classic and recent artis

WILWAYCO'S 'Silent Music' to play in Paris this week /D4

LIFESTYLE

From architectural landmark to parking lot

BY THIS TIME THE wrecker's ball will be pretty close to having turned the venerable Avenue Theater into rubble.

One of central Manila's unappreciated yet architectural heritage landmarks, the structure on Avenida Rizal, which once was among the city's grandest cinemas, has fallen on hard times.

Reports say the Avenue Theater property will be converted into a parking lot.

National Artist Pablo Antonio Juan Nakpil designed the building in the 1930s, innovating it in the 1950s. Nakpil, son of composer and lawyer/poet Julio Nakpil and Hispanic de Jesus, student of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and former professor of the University of the Philippines College of Architecture and School of Fine Arts, was also responsible for the Metropolitan Theater, the Philippine General Hospital, the Philippine Columbian Association building, the Philippine Normal College, the Philippine Women's University, the Philippine Education Co. building, the Philippine National Bank building in Escolta, the Philippine Trust Co. building in Escolta, the Philippine Medical Association building

"RED Rice Longevity"

"LOTUS Cloud Pond" (above); "DOUBLE Pink Lotus" (left)

"CLOUDTREE"

A fine specimen of the postmodern

By Constantine C. Tejero

POSTMODERNISM HAS BEEN AROUND for four decades already. Emerging in the 1960s and developing in the academe in the '90s, it is now being brushed aside even in the world of show business and fashion.

And yet many of those who reflect latitudinarily use the word don't really get it, and still many are completely in the dark. So, what makes a postmodernist?

This artistic movement is described as "a reaction to or rejection of the dogma, principles or premises of established modernisms," characterized by the use of "elements from historical vernacular styles and offers playful illusion, decoration and complexity."

Academic disputation aside, it is, quite simply, a reworking of traditional forms and ancient methods.

While in its first development modernism looks more and more austere, minimalist, even functional, the postmodern appears complicated, ostensible, even fantastical. One doesn't have to put meaning to that, it's just a trend then.

A first discussion is "Lotus Cloud Pond III," an exhibit of monoprint and pieces to sell on canvas by Emily NOG Chong, presented by Galleria Uranida until June 8, in Mezzanine Space at the Glass Wing, 2/F Ayala Museum, Makati Ave. cor. De la Rosa St., Makati City.

In its winding playfulness and self-conscious employment of fantasy complex forms and allusions to historic styles, Chong's art certainly satisfies the standard definition of the postmodern.

Reinvented images

Priya Kholhatta, in a review in Asian Art News, says of this Chinese American artist: "Her work is eclectic and multilayered, replete with a variety of images ranging from the decorative to the stories from myths and customs of art from across the world."

One glance and the viewer recognizes the teasing quality of these pieces. The playful ones remark that this artist has made her paintings to look like prints and the prints appear like, well, paintings.

Most of these manuscripts are various depictions of the sacred lotus, many of them similar to composition and varying only in hues, tendrils and textures.

"TREEHUT"

Quite positive by are "Lotus Cloud Pond" and "Double Pink Lotus," the first being the lustful, set with its pink blossoms, cascade-green tendrils, sharp-tear shells and turquoise pond on a field of burnt orange.

Here, the traditional oriental motifs appear not only in the Indian lotus but also in its stalk that forms the Chinese knot of longevity, in the pond that's familiar in Japanese scroll painting, in the fir trees and sun.

Shelbetta analyzes Chong's techniques thus: "She starts by stripping images of their symbolic content and renaming just the form. Then she imaginatively reincarnates them in such a way that they preserve their individuality yet weave into each other. The outcome is highly refined compositions of reinvented images that have an independent, complex identity and are able to communicate in a totally fresh manner. In that sense, she is a true postmodernist."

Complex composition

Some of the paintings in the exhibit look more like drawing illustrations and photo prints than painting proper. A few are compressed to remove their bold black outlines and monochromatic washes.

"CloudTree" is a black-and-white composition image of flower, tree, cumulus cloud, tree cocoon, branches, roots and veins on a turquoise background. The compounding of various elements produces the surreal effect of X-ray photography.

"Dandelion" shows a weightless outline of mini starlings to form a gnarled black tree superimposed on a purple vase with tables resting against a mauve sky. The complex layering and the incandescence produced is remarkable.

Whether the artist intended to express some profundity or internal tension in these pieces, we don't know. This is Chong's first solo art, and if you get meaning beyond that, it's clear.

The most exquisite accolade awarded these pieces Roberto Smith says in New York Times: "The paintings' translucent tones and delicate linear fragments seem to invite us to love the viewer's eyes, as if bits of Chinese ornaments or embroidery were drifting through layers of folded, colored air."

Chong took up Fine Arts, major in Painting, at the Rhode Island School of Design. She took further studies at the New York Studio School of Painting, Drawing and Sculpture.

She received the Fulbright Scholarship for the Arts and New York Foundation for the Arts fellowships.

"THE DIVIDER"

Art of divide and multiply

By Gina Dominguez
Correspondent

I COMES LIKE AN EAGERLY ANTICIPATED dessert: conjuring images that rekindle the senses and resurrect the spirit, and like all or a long, debilitating summer spell.

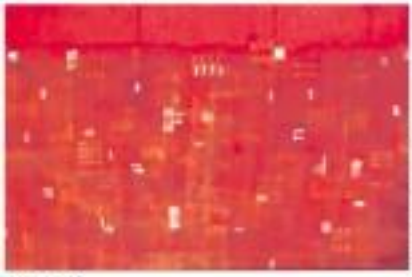
This sums up the first solo show of emerging abstract artist Tito Herrera, "Divisions," at Romulo Gallery, Art Walk, 3/F Megastrall until June 122.

A Fine Arts graduate of the University of the East in 2000, Herrera majored in advertising, a course that helpedhim land a job as web designer for ADFW apparel outfit and later as graphic artist for a well-known recording company.

Herrera joined a number of creative address bump outs to begin in'd Scale. He placed third in the 2004 Metrobank Art Competition, and a finalist in Institute des Associations of the Philippines Annual and the Philip Morris Art Competition.

By a time now, Herrera has become a regular artist of Renaissance Gallery, whose owner, Rob Romulo, has encouraged new artists.

Today Herrera has, on record, become the gallery's bestseller, which is doubly amazing since it has only been a year since he first con-



"MITUS City" 2

"HOUSTED"

"COLLIDE"

signed his work to history.

Mounting his first solo show, Herrera has works of varied sizes, though they come in even dimensions: 2 x 2 ft., 3 x 3 ft., 4 x 4 ft. These sizes are to keeping with his approach to art, which takes off from his minimal image of the square, one that virtually keeps multiplying through fusion and fragmentation. Of course, this postmodernly tailored figure is consistently engaged in a lively dialogue with other squares, rectangles, tiny circles and fine electronic line, drawn from a Rapidlet pencil, serving as thematic presence.

Landscape

The frame of Herrera's art is the landscape, both abstract and literary, as the subconscious

"SPACES"

strives to undertake the metaphysical journey from experience to memory. Thus in "Ground," Herrera gives three levels of the physical terrain, of gradating hues, and accentuated by circle on the topmost layer.

In "Industrial Mind," he zeroes in on a silhouette of what looms as an urban infrastructure, aerial and architectural forms, highlighted by a row of horizontal and vertical lines.

Herrera, on occasion, also indulges in pure whimsy, the accidental or the purely unexpected, like any abstractionist who has earned his keep.

In "Battle City" 2, the square panels seem successful from view, with the artist-editor blocking interesting interval flaws like red squares, to an amusing horizontal-vertical collision course.

Herrera's appeal as painter lies in his ease and in his no-holds-outlines variations of the rectangular. The results manifest in "Spaces," a grouping of 16 panels (all 12" x 12"), with colors assorting, plum-orange, apple-green, yellow-ochre—that the overall image is a present-to-art visual harmony.

Add to this the highly restrained use of neutral tones that have emerged from the use of a crisply clear work processor of one other medium.

The soft-spoken artist from Cotabato, who lives by the banks of the Philippine National Railways, has stamped his signature style—squares and rectangles divided and linked by lineal sections and swirl-like circles. His philosophy thrives on the simplest equation. It's called divide and multiply.

In this age of unimpressed chaos and visual mutilation, Herrera's art seems destined for loftier heights.

E-mail author at gdominguez@yahoo.com

Banz Ba

By Mike Melchor
Contributor

BAMBOOYA, BANZ
A. 7 year-old boy
Bagulo where he wa
phanied after the banker hi
ly was sheltered in sullened
not his during World War
and a once carefree
Japanese bombing that woul
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Together with another
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During this time, he change
nickname to "Banz."

After graduation, he got
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did everything from Chri

Pacena, Calubayan ride the 'Jelo Submarine'

EXCITING YOUNG ARTISTS Aaron Pacena III and Jesse Calubayan went up in 'Jelo Submarine,' a show of highly personal works on recent and not-so-recent journeys.

The exhibit opens on June 7, 8 p.m., at Big Mini Mini (100 Dela Rodriguez St., cor. E. Rodriguez ave., QC).

The show consists of Pacena's striking digital art and Calubayan's intriguing drawings, paintings and installations.

Pacena is finals artist at the University of Santo Tomas College of Fine Arts and Design, while Calubayan works at the UST Museum of Arts and Sciences.

The show runs until July 31.

"HERE," by Pacena

Visual Arts

Salvosa at CI

"Signum," the 21st one-man show of Jonahmar Salvosa is ongoing until June 30, at CI Fonts Place (18 Mission St., North Greenhills, San Juan). Salvosa has won various awards such as the Art Association of the Philippines Annual contest, while his works have already been exhibited in various hotels and galleries. His murals and sculptures grace buildings and offices all over the world. Call 7250715, 7220941 or 8818601.

"BIOSHAPE," by Jonahmar Salvosa

Rodriguez at Mag:Net

Mag:Net Gallery (Power Plants Center, corner of Pasay de Roxas and Gedeon St., Makati) presents the first one-man show of Raul Todd Igpit, "Heterotime," June 8-30. The exhibit presents Rodriguez's series of small distilled mixed media renderings in pastel crayon and oriental sign works done in oil on pastel. Call 8151996.

"SOMETHING to do: Imaginary Mushroom Cloud," by Raul S. Rodriguez

Jimenez's 'Balut' sculptures

Felix Jimenez presents his eight-piece installation, "Balut," until June 17, at Mag:Net Gallery (Greenbelt 5, Ayala Center, QC). The mixed-fashion Jimenez's small-scale sculptures made of welded steel discards. The works are visual puns, where the literal and figurative are combined. Call 8183136 or 7250531. Meanwhile, Jed Escueta's "Worshipful" opens on June 8, at Magnet Gallery, 6/F (The Linear, EDSA cor. Ayala Ave., QC). Call 8150000 or e-mail magnetcenter@gmail.com.

"LILAC," by Jesus Genobiro

Genobiro at One Workshop

One Workshop Gallery (2/F La Fuente Plaza II, Don Chino Roces Ave., cor. Solis St., Makati) presents Jesus Genobiro's first first solo, "Sapiro Iglesia," on June 7-17. It has also graduate of the Philippine Women's University. Shell and Stella contends. The works consist of paintings and drawings on canvas. The "Kingdom and Order" showing Genobiro's strengths as well-balanced composition. Call 8150504 or 8180214.

Art classes

Art Informal, an artist run center for art and creativity, will hold workshops for adults and teens in June and July. Courses include drawing, painting and sculpture. Call 7256841 for visit the school at 1731 Constantino St., East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, or e-mail artinformal@yahoo.com.

Alcazaren at Finale

Opening on June 8 at Finale Art File (4/F, Lull Center, Pasay Road cor. Makati Ave., Makati City), Ivan Alcazaren's "Serpent Movies," Mostly composed of fossilized discarded materials (with old animation cel collaborations from the TV commercials) this exhibit aired in the '80s, discarded papers, old drawing and sketches, this collages depict multilayered worlds to which a society in shifting color contingent, and line on interruption. Call 8150504 or 8180214.

DESCENDED art by Ivan Alcazaren

FEAST! University recently renamed an exhibit in Cubao to be his in Innocenses, Manila, featuring works by students and faculty members of the College of Architecture and Fine Arts. Associate Lorenzo Dino, Feast's art consultant (third from left), leads the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Also present are Adolfo Jesus Gaspar, Feast president; Milagros Lane, gallery owner; and Architecture and Fine Arts dean Jaycelyn Manangkay.

Balderosa in Batanes

Manuel Balderosa will hold an exhibit at the Hall Gallery of the Batanes National Library on June 12-21. Balderosa is the first Filipino visual artist to be made an artist in residence in Batanes, invited by the National Trust in the Philippines on behalf of Fernando Amorsolo, under the sponsorship of the Fernando Amorsolo Art Foundation.

Lacuarta at Drawing Room

Anna Lacuarta presents "Directions," until June 10, at the Drawing Room (Malcolm Mills, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati). The exhibit showcases Lacuarta's works produced after her residency at Art Omi, Omi, Ghent, New York. Lacuarta's fellowship cited in 2003. The mixed-media exhibit showcases video-flash mostly symbolic of travel, physical and emotional. Call 8915980/8813.

Lodesma photos at Alcove

Rhoda Gallery presents glimpses of the Bhutan Europe as seen through the eyes of multi-awarded photographer Lester P. Lodesma in "Passage through Europe," June 9-23. Rhoda Gallery is at Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati Ave., Ayala, Makati. Call 867 005.

EDGAR DOCTOR ROCKS ROCKWELL

Edgar Doctor's "Random Thoughts" runs until June 11, at the North Court, Pinoy Wave Mall, Rockwell. Doctor is one of the country's top artists, excelling in watercolor, oil and acrylic, and in sculpture. The exhibit is curated by the Yellow Door Gallery. Call 0908-3624347.

nez in retrospective

"A CALL for Peacegypsy"

Bula eventually became an art educator and a full time painter. He was aware in the art circles for his unmistaken young artists to develop and discover their own distinctive styles.

Life for Bula was, indeed, a long and interesting journey which had molded and shaped him as artist and man. Leaving behind power and severity into his strength, his art, he became inspired by Biblical readings, especially the story of Jesus calming the turbulent waves which brought panic to the disciples.

The inspiration is evident in his "Pentecost" works, depicting tranquil scenes of nature, a vast horizon, marked by shapes and hills in the distance, typically with a third to five figures, in close above with a serene and gentle light.

In today's hectic world the art of Bula gives us a chance to bring into our homes a "Dreamscape," something to transport ourselves away from daily problems and recharge our spiritual batteries.

Also featured in the exhibit will be the intriguing works from Bula's "Subliminal Series" oeuvre, which explores the third chakra underwater. The fish are creatures of the sea, but the supernatural on their faces and their actions are definitely human. These works clearly illustrate the artist's fine sense of humor and background as an artist, surrealism and animism.

"Peacegypsy: Dreams" will open on tonight, Artwalk, 4/L, Bldg. A, Ayala Megamall, Mandaluyong City, on June 9, 5 p.m. The exhibit will run until June 23.

"SAMBAHAN Kapatid," by Felix Arnaldo

Arnaldo, Espiritu in Alabang

Felix Arnaldo and Jun Espiritu are featured in "One On One," the exclusive new exhibit of Galeria Fernando Cano Duarte, Extra Studio Bldg., Madrigal Business Park, Alabang-Zapote Road. The exhibit contains recent abstract works and showcases the artists' distinctive styles. Arnaldo's works are characterized by the use of dimensional materials and mixed media. The show runs until June 15. Call 8508800 or 8505-1488 ext.

"SA PAUL," by Jun Espiritu

Calaba at Blanc

"PAGBABAGSIK," the 10-piece solo exhibit of Mickie Calaba, is on view at Music Art Space (2/F 177 Visayas Ave., Vasra Village, Makati City).

A major presentation in the AAP Annual, Calaba delves into the question of how things are conceived, visible. Her artistic by-product is a series of small distilled mixed media renderings in pastel crayon and oriental sign works done in oil on pastel. Call 8151996.

The show runs until June 17. Call 7528822.

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A reputable gallery on the fashionable Rue de Seine features the Filipino abstractionist

"SILENT Music"

Wilwayco in Paris

By Linda Zubeta

LIKE THE WIND, HE GOES, and silently like landslide of music. That, without much fanfare, Edwin Wilwayco has been showing in Europe for barely two months now; the first in Germany last April, and this week, in Paris, where the Galerie Rimon de Cayeux on rue Du Bac in Seine will open on June 7 "Silent Music," a suite of works inspired by the music of minimalist Philip Glass.

It's no secret that to get a show in the Galerie Rimon, the admission is booked until 2007. But after a Filipino consular official in Paris showed gallery officials Wilwayco's portfolio, the Filipino artist got booked.

Earlier, Wilwayco's "Ladies Do Kiss Too" opened in Frankfurt-Hofheimer on April 21. The works got good reviews from the local Wiesbadin press and were sold out, that Wilwayco was particularly pleased that two are permanents of the University of Mainz bought his works.

The Wiesbaden show consolidates the growing reputation of Philippine art in European circles, and proved the attraction and universality of Wilwayco's unique abstraction, which is expected to be reaffirmed in his Paris show.

On his 50th cuts of paintings (mainly oil on paper), Wilwayco realizes once more the concept of abstraction: that art is not a passive mirroring of nature; rather, it is an expressive ordering. Even realistic art is not a mere copying of external reality. Its techniques of anatomical detailing, composition, and light and shade are principles of ordering, not mirrorers of appearances, and devices of rendering. There is no such thing as "pure" or "passive" art.

In a way, the "Silent Music" paintings are a critique of pure form. After all, painting seems diminished, even impoverished, by the verbiation of the outer world.

For example, the seasons, in most painting or literature, conjure a whole range of sentiments, personal, social and religious values that are otherwise lost when the artist attempts at pure, that is non-descriptive, non-narrative-based, aesthetics.

But to say that abstract art divests the outer world is most partly it is not totally correct. Rather, abstract art discovers new qualities and relationships, just as poetry, when it breaks away from prose, does not exactly purify prose but rather discovers new verbal patterns, new ways of saying things. Abstract art is discovery and rediscovery.

Music

By making Vivaldi's seasons, "Four Seasons," the animating spirit of his art-making, Wilwayco progresses descriptive seasons into canvas, roughly approximating the movements of the seasons in appropriate colors and gestures that the viewer may consider as painted musical notes or applied orthosonance. The result is not an exact visual representation, as much as expressive abstraction.

Ultimately, Wilwayco's "Silent Music" is not so much a paean to nature but a rediscovery of nature. It is basically a resurrection of the romance of nature that was repelled by the modern abstract movement in the 20th century. If in the last century abstraction was a critique of the content of representation in an ideal values, a repudiation of the old belief that content could serve as a model of harmony for man, that social reasons, explorations of the self, the discovery of hidden urges and desires, and technological advances had become the determinants of the new. If under conditioning and conflicted sensibility, then Wilwayco's expressive abstraction of the 21st century reinstates the old order, enabling viewer's moods as a unified sensibility and modern psychology of life.

But what is restored is not exactly the old world, but rather, a new vision and a new emotion.

"SILENT Music" 23

"SILENT Music" C

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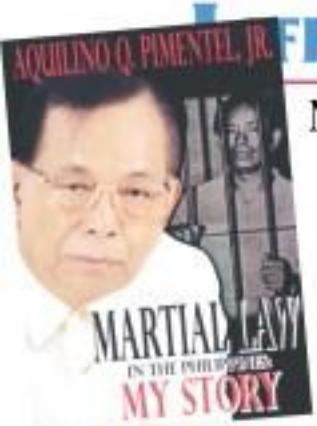


Nene Pimentel relives the horror, the horror

By Gerry Lirio

SEN. JUDGE ARROYO CALLS him the "last of martial law"—in the genteel brag of deference to the one-man rule of President Ferdinand Marcos.

The boy named Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr., Davao young provincial lawyer, fought Marcos relentlessly; it eventually led to his arrest and detention, all a result of his refusal to embrace the dictatorship.

Pimentel outlived Marcos and is now telling his story according to former President Corazon Aquino. Pimentel's book, about 600 pages, should have been titled "Living to Tell the Tale," if only because he survived the ordeal.

"Martial Law in the Philippines: My Story" will be launched on Wednesday at the Manila Hotel. It narrates Pimentel's martial law experiences, a story of courage, daring and much faith to stand up to the abuses when it was extremely dangerous to do so.

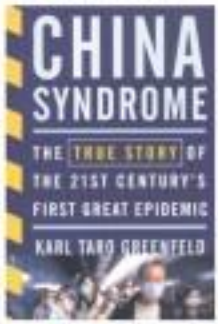
Written for two years, the book is Pimentel's recollection of and perception on what really took place in 1971-1986.

"If experience is the best teacher, then instead imprisonment was life's simplest instruction," Aquino said.

MORE E7

The senator comes up with a riveting history of Marcos and martial law

'China' crisis



Remember SARS? An engrossing look on the fearful emergence of the deadly virus

"China Syndrome: The True Story of the 21st Century's First Great Epidemic"
By Karl Taro Greenfeld
HarperCollins, New York
2006, 442 pages

By Rosel S. De Vera

THERE IS A DISTINCT DRAMA THAT comes with writing about disease, chronicles and deaths. That manifestations and how they are dealt with by governments can be as thrilling as any work of fiction. Or worse, a staggering 1976 people killed by SARS. It's a numbers game of exponential finality.

REVIEW

Greenfeld, who headed the Time Asia at the time of the virus' emergence, weaves together this formidable tapestry of terror through exhaustive research and interviews, crafting a tale that is scarier than any piece of virus fiction. He weaves several real-time plots through "China Syndrome": the race to find the source and control the SARS virus, the latter, if only, sacrifice of medical professionals in stopping what seemed to be a new pandemic), how Greenfeld's staff would cover such a difficult story; and how the lives of real people were being altered cruelly, randomly caused by the now-threatening virus.

Human element

But perhaps the most astounding element to "China Syndrome" was choice of content. Simply put, Greenfeld explains in the author's note, the Chinese government, by denying and deliberately covering up what was really happening in its territory, allowed the virus to spread, nearly triggering a worldwide calamity.

"It's the world would soon discover, if everything that was known inside China had been shared with the world just a few weeks earlier, hundreds of lives would have been saved," Greenfeld points out. "Denial kills, as surely as any microbe."

All these scientific fact and journalistic detail is meshed with Greenfeld's gift for imagery and description. Like the virus' themselves, Greenfeld's writing is precise and effective, perfectly designed for its intent. "China Syndrome" presents its topic with a dizzying single-mindedness.

Aside from the book's thoughtful handling of what could easily have been dense scientific exposition, "China Syndrome" adds a "chasing the story" vibe by following Time Asia's attempt to properly cover the advance of the disease.

The conspiracy of silence that graces corporate and international representatives is chilling in its refusal to give in. It is clear that, if not for some Chinese doctors' willingness to defy the silence, things could have been much worse.

Greenfeld is particularly effective in narrating the front-line work of the doctors and nurses who faced down the unknown agent, some in the cost of their survivor. "It is remarkable...to all my reporting on SARS, how infrequently I came across a case of a medical professional refusing to treat a contamination."

Severe hypochondriacs should not read this book because it will undoubtedly unleash nightmares. As the book ends, Greenfeld himself, any optimistic note that mankind has seen the last of these deadly viruses.

They're changing, even as you read this sentence, evolving into something different, "sooner or later, a random mutation will occur that will allow a virus particle to survive when previous mutations could not. 'It's probability sooner than it would have to be a species that was present in sufficient quantities to allow for that winning...or losing, for the human race—genetic lottery tickets."

Strikingly, "China Syndrome" ends with what hopefully is the end of the scourge of SARS, but the book notes that avian flu is now equally becoming a concern. With his calmly purposeful and powerful prose, Karl Taro Greenfeld paints a portrait of the pathogen as protagonist — and shows what happens when you find the spotlight looking right back at you.

Available in hardcover at National Book Store

Book of plays by Casaje

"MGA PREMYADONG DULA," A COLlection of Loie Casaje's award-winning plays published by De La Salle University Press, will be launched at 7 p.m., June 8, at the Main Theater Lobby of Colleges Literary of the Philippines.

The book features Casaje's five contemporary plays, namely "Dum dolu (Uro, Sino Ako Cog? Ulo-ulo)," "Sepanoypot," "Mass histerya" and "Paalam de Familia," all of which have been staged previously except for "Mass-sensya."

Characterized by his pared-to-essence, evocative dialogue, sandstorm settings and conflicts that weave, these dramas explore human relations as well as conflicts triggered by betrayal, love, separation, failure, and loss of reputation and dignity.

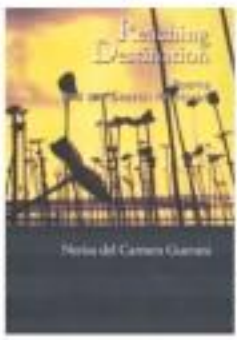
Casaje, a Palanca-winning playwright, was recognized as a local fellow by Dramatic Pen, the University of Philippines Creative Writing Center in 2003and in 1991-1992. He is the president and artistic director of Dramatis Personae, an alternative theater group founded in 1980. He is a known director and actor both on stage and on television, script writer/story, photographer, videographer and director of "Batang Pier" (1999) of Golden Screen Films of Regal Productions.

He is a professor and chair of Productive Design, School of Design and Arts, De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde; professor and chair of the Department of Language and Mass Communications; and director of Performing Arts at La Consolacion College-Manila; guest lecturer at the English Department, College of Arts and Sciences, Holy Angel University (Angeles City); professor at the Department of Mass Communication, Institute of Arts and Sciences, San Sebastian College-Manila; and professor in Trauma International Business School (Eastwood, Libis).

Theater, movie and television actor will do a dramatic reading of selected excerpts from the plays.

Because being homeless doesn't make you a bum

By Angelo V. Suárez
Contributor



The poems of Nerisa del Carmen Guevara leap not only toward readers but also into the space surrounding listeners

IT'S ABOUT DAMNED TIME LOVERS of literature quietly acquire access to the poetry of Nerisa del Carmen Guevara.

A blurb by poet/translator Lourd de Veyra for her collection, "Feeding Destination" (UST Publishing House, tel. 731-3522, 406451) for A252.50/P50 expresses his surprise at the book's being "mysteriously overdue, for she is one poet who has already arrived a long time ago."

That it was a finalist in last year's National Book Award is deceptive: While "Feeding Destination" certainly is a book of poems, it isn't just a book. As a book-and-CD project, it is a venture into the possibilities not just of the oral tradition (any elder can read a poem to an audience, though not always with the same) but of the aural. The poems leap not only toward readers but also into the space surrounding listeners.

Listening, in this sense, becomes as good as reading—if not better, one least take note that the collection is at seven hours, 45 (or book-plus-CD).

That which inhabits the domain of the ear—not necessarily linguistic and intelligible—is no mere addendum but is as mainly content as those which inhabit the spaces around it. Sounds are sound—and you and mouth (or in reading quietly and out loud).

We can only hope that the Manila Critics Circle—the body responsible for the National Book Awards—are well aware of the collection's inherent duality which is to single... and not single... achievement.

Nerisa herself continues to a presentation with space in the book's closing song, "The Search for Home." It is by this point that the poems in the collection are brief: a creature after all has more room for maneuver if s/he is small.

The author's own physical smallness (Nerisa appears thin and fragile as poet) seems to translate well into economy of words, for sounding as but could fit anywhere (...I crowded light, sun light. I could slip through crowds. What was, probably, a cramped space for any individual was space enough for me and then some."

In "Feeding Instruction," form and content merge. Just listen/measure each text, because contrasted with what feels (or promises to bring/feed) it has. Observe: "How do you anchor/ the wind/ like hopeless/ it is against/ what you are?/ By being small. By staying low. By wearing almost nothing at all and keeping, holding to precious light ingested only/ the moment in front of you. Because you have nothing else but that. To not hope for more."

However, this apparent contentment accommodates a deeper discontent—an unrest, if not restlessness. Nerisa—no longer author but persona, as speaking entity—wants to travel light because she wants to travel in the first place, to "search for home."

If, in Lourd's words, Nerisa as poet has, in fact, long arrived, Nerisa as persona is only about to arrive, if arrival is at all possible.

"Feeding Destination" is therefore the partial documentation of a journey, the memoirs of a speaker in transit. No wonder the title's verb itself is in the present progressive.

Arrival, while possibly impossible, is no doubt hoped for. Paradoxically the book begins with "final," where the persona holds destiny, "Everything ends in water[.]" and "Everything will end./ Sooner./ (the silence will)."

What appears plain deserves a second look: The poem's initial tone of self-admonition may be as much an expression of hope as it is of hopelessness. The word "end" in this poem achieves an ambivalence matched only by its speaker's: Is it the end of the line or the start of subsets of "end" as "conclusion" (especially in terms of love ending), s/he may also associate "end" with "purpose," as in the Mother-Father-Saint "The end justifies the means."

And as everything will end, everything else has an end, an underlying principle or meaning—which is 3rd to-see.

After the title, it is the book's first poem that sets the journey until. Every moment hence becomes a point, become a body of waters, a temperature etc., traveling toward that yearned-for whole. But complete and vast mean where all things meet, all moments converge.

The poems come to be records of a journey but are journeying themselves, are the journey itself.

Transformational teaching

LIGHTHOUSE EVANGELICAL BOOKS AND Gifts, publishers of contemporary inspirational and Christian literature, is announcing the release of its newest title, "Teaching to Change Lives" by renowned American educator Howard Hendricks.

The 332-page book outlines seven proven, easy-to-grasp principles any teacher can apply. It also includes a helpful section on the end portion where readers can make plans of action to make the teaching process a meaningful and transforming one in life.

The author is a professor and chairman of the Center for Christian Leadership at the Dallas Theological Seminary in Texas, USA. He is author of several books and has been widely published in periodicals such as Decision, Moody and Christianity Today.

Call 09189497981 or e-mail sritam@sirius.com.

Nene Pimentel relives the horror, the horror

To next page B2

ways sure of Honasan's in the book. Indeed, while he survived the dark years, Pimentel was arrested and detained by Marcos' men just over four years, only a time nearly breaking his family's heart.

Pimentel, now 72, entered politics as a delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention. He was detained in Camp Crame for three months for opposing the 1973 Constitution which gave Marcos dictatorial powers over him/her views, only a time nearly breaking his family's heart.

He was jailed again for leading a demonstration against the farcical January Batasan elections in 1978, and again in 1982 on charges of rebellion. In 1985, he was arrested anew, this time for allegedly participating in an ambush in Cotabato.

"My Story" begins a few months after the imposition of martial rule, when Pimentel was arrested for the first time. It talks about the Marcos dictatorship from the point of view of Pimentel's then-teenage daughter Gwen Dy, and how his family fared in Rhodesian managed to endure it.

Passion

"Many people have writers and will write books about the inhuman years," Aquino writes in the foreword. "But no many can tell the story of martial law with (as much as Honorable's) passion."

But the book is not just about the Pimentels. It also tries to weave home-made in one of the darkest episodes in the nation's history, from the 1971 Constitutional Convention to Proclamation 1081, from the assassination of Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. to the 1986 snap presidential elections, from ordinary people, living and dead.

For instance, Pimentel cites as answers some questions, among them: Who were the Blanco boys who engineered the election of Carlos Garcia as president of the 1971 Constitutional? Who was Eduardo Quimco and what was the story about his mysterious death? Who was Jacinto Jacinto delegates? What role did Gilberto Duavit play in the convention?

Other questions: Did the Big Four bomb the Liberal Party meeting in Plaza Miranda? Who planned the bombing? Was one of Ninoy from Fort Bonifacio? How did Fortunato Abaya and Ramon Cagaoa long escape from martial-law agents?

The answers enthrall.

Or: Why did Napoleon Lechaca hold Ambassador Benjamin Bautmisbre to be "executed" in Washington, D.C.? How did Supreme Court Chief Enrique Fernando lose his credibility at the height of the investigation of the Aquino-Galman double-murder case? Is it true that Cory Aquino recently received Philip Habib, personal envoy of US President Ronald Reagan, before the Palma Beach-ista?

Says Aquino: "Time tells it all to his personal account of those days which were both exciting and terrifying." Who was it who said that a great book emerges from an upheaval in one's soul?

All this time he was serving the book, Pimentel lost weight, developed eyesight problems and pain in his eyes. He talked to friends and other martial-law colleagues, and went through video clips and hundreds of personal documents that are now in the book.

Arroyo recalls Pimentel did not enjoy getting arrested and detained. "Indeed, as far as Nene was concerned, life was not spring to mush him: the elevator, which was in quit, a house he couldn't leave," Arroyo says. "Quite apart from the fact that one who just couldn't learn—in election after election that the distance aside from Nene and the Filipino people — to uphold the Constitution and the laws. Nene mustn't just being (in)Marcos(ed). He was just being (un)elected. She is clueless teachers of democracy like the Island Marcos."

THE TOP-SELLING NON-FICTION BOOKS

From Solidaridad Bookshop

'The History of Mindanao, Volume I'
By Jesuits R. Cuesta, Inter-national School Publications, Cagayan de Oro (1986)
A sweeping account of the island of promise by a Mindanao pastor

'Bulan, Patria Adorada: The Filipino as Ilustrada, The Ilustrado as Filipino'
By Alfredo Roces, De La Salle University Press (1473)
A social and political history of the Filipino enlightened elite

'Why We Are Poor: Heroes in the Attic, Termites in the Soil (Collection of Essays)'
By J. Soneil Lim, Anvil-Visited Publishing House (PHIC)
Scathing social essays on the Filipino outlook by the National Artist for Literature

'Terror in Manila, February 1945'
By Antonio Perez de Olaguer (1945)
An abridged translation of "El Terror Sobre Manila Filipinas," the definitive eyewitness account of the horrors of the Japanese retreat from Manila.

'Authentic (though Not Exotic: Essays on Filipino Identity'
By Fernando Nakpil Zialcita, Ateneo University Press (1473)
An anthropologist's take on what constitutes the Filipino

'Understanding Mindanao Conflict'
By Patricio P. Diaz (1700)
A political scientist's account of the problem facing Mindanao

'Under the Crescent Moon: Rebellion in Mindanao'
By Mar Rel Dongallan Hingorani Gloria M. Glorioso, Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ)
Respected women-journalists tackle The Mindanao conflict.

FOREIGN TITLES:

'Juan Carlos: Steering Spain from Dictatorship to Democracy'
By Paul Preston, W.W. Norton (1, 750)
A much-respected historical on Spanish history in the Anglo-American world explains how the House of Bourbon re-decorated itself and Spain.

'The 48 Laws of Power'
By Robert Greene, W. W. Norton (PHOO)
The best-selling book for those who want power, watch power, or want to arm themselves against power. Greene has studied or been in Machiavelli's "The Prince." He explains principles such as, everyone wants more power, emotions, including love, are detrimental, deceit and manipulation are life's paramount tools.

Anyone aiming for privileged health will be put off at the start, but the authors counter, saying "honesty is indeed a power strategy," and "genuinely innocent people may still be playing for power," instead of criminal, this compendium aims to guide those who embrace power in a ruthless game, and will ensure success.

'Jihad vs. McWorld: Terrorism's Challenge to Democracy'
By Benjamin R. Barber, Ballantine Books (PTSO)
An engaging account of the world after 9/11.

Solidaridad Bookshop is near the corner of Padre Faura and Adriatico Streets in Ermita, Manila. Call 5210146.

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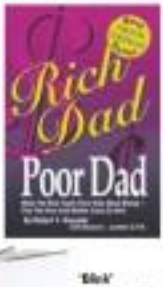


'Rich Dad, Poor Dad'
By Robert Kiyosaki
Robert Kiyosaki developed his unique economic perspective through experience as a pair of desperate influences: his own highly educated but fiscally scatterbrain father, and the multimillionaire eighth-grade dropout father of his best friend. The lifelong monetary problems experienced by his "poor dad" infuse needle pinchers, while to quotable, wise moral quips authored by street smart, successful "rich dad" the counterpoint communicated by his "rich dad" (that "the poor and the middle class work for money," but "the rich have money work for them").

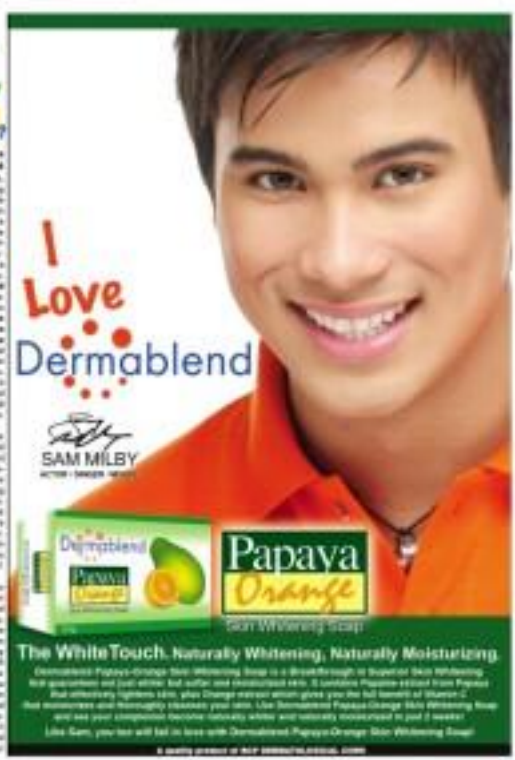
'Blink'
By Malcolm Gladwell
Malcolm Gladwell provides an entertaining and illuminating look at how we make snap judgments—about people's intentions, the authenticity of a work of art, even military strategy. He concludes, often startling how people make instant decisions in a wide range of fields from psychology to police work, is that we can make better instant judgments by training our mind and senses to focus on the most relevant bits—and that less input (as long as it's the right input) is better than more.

'The Tipping Point'
By Malcolm Gladwell
The premise of this little piece of pop-sociology: for truth to appeal. Slick changes can have big effects; when small numbers of people start behaving differently, behavior can ripple outward until a certain mass or "tipping point" is reached, changing the world.

'Who Moved my Cheese?'
By Dr. Spencer Johnson
Change can be a blessing or a curse, depending on your perspective. The message of "Who Moved My Cheese?" is that if you come to see it as a blessing, if they understand the nature of cheese and the role it plays in their lives, "Who Moved My Cheese?" is a parable that takes place in a maze. Two beings live in that maze. Sniff and Scurry are mice—instinctive and unsophisticated, they just need cheese and are willing to do whatever it takes to get it.

'Your Best Life Now'
By Joel Osteen
In this straightforward guide, Joel Osteen gives you a way to improve your life for good and help you experience victory, joy, and satisfaction every day. He offers you unique insights and easy assessments that will help you overcome every obstacle you may encounter. As you put the principles found in these pages to work today, you will begin living "Your Best Life Now"!

'Holy Blood, Holy Grail'
By Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln
Explosive, thought-provoking, fiercely compelling, "Holy Blood, Holy Grail" breaks bold new ground with its shocking revelations about the lineage of Christ and the legacy of the Holy Grail. Based on decades of research, filled with eye-opening new evidence and stunning scholarship, this authoritative work uncovers an alternate history as chilling as it is believable.



Super weddings and Superman in Mr. & Ms.

ARE YOU READY TO TIME THE FLIGHT?

The June issue of Mr. & Ms., "the Supermonthly of the Body, Mind and Spirit," has a series of features on weddings and everything bridal.

Learn about bride Weddings and tips to a happy marriage, the Muslim way.

The article, "Reinventing Weddings and Marriages," checks could shadow in the marriage ritual. Should not "Who may kiss the bride" be "Who may kiss each other" in the name of man-woman equality? It's one of the questions the article tries to answers.

"You are the only one I modified, but now, you are the only one I truly love," reads a part of actor Raymart Santiago's wedding vow. Uncover the complete version of his and bride Claudine Barretto's vows which they exchanged during their nuptials, touted as the wedding of the year.

Mr. & Ms., the only magazine that focuses on the preserved, discusses the popular topic on sex-matters. Is your partner really the one for you? Find out.

The June issue also features its Best. Actor-politician Bong Revilla is featured. "I take time to sit down and talk with them on a one-on-one basis. I always treat musicians with them," says Bong. The amateur reveals his cure for the's (Jinnon Revilla Jr.) style of disciplining. Mind you, it is: widow a whip.

A feature on consecration dwells on the possibility that a grandfather or a father could be reborn as a son or even a daughter. Read more about reincarnation in the June issue.

Columnists Jaime Licauco and Khaled Poacurso explain the healing power of prayer, based on scientific studies.

Further discussion on Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code" makes the Mr. & Ms. June issue more interesting. What does the Bible say about the matter? Where did Brown's facts really come from?

Other looming issues, including global warming and shorter change, are discussed. Columnist reviews Made Mario notes the effects on the habitat and gas economics of conventional change.

Inspirations, whose movie franchise is being revived, is featured in the issue's special guest fold. Get acquainted with the newest actor to play the mass of steel, Brandon Routh.

Mr. & Ms. is available at Fortune's Supermarket, National Book Store, Filbar's, 7-11, Hypermarts, LA. Communications, the Garage, Shigart Plus, Cash and Carry, and at her popular outlets.

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Book on parish community

A BOOK THAT CHRONICLES IN WORDS and pictures the first six years of a young parish community will be launched on June 18, 3 p.m., at Our Lady of Peñafrancia Parish Church in Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

Titled "In This Place," the book provides a template for community and church building. It includes short tales for reminders.

The first contains photographs of the new church by well-known photographer Pancho Jacobe, with the accompanying text explaining the meaning and symbolism behind the design of every detail of the structure.

The second segment is an account of the community's journey toward building itself and its church. It was written by members of the parish themselves.

Our Lady of Peñafrancia Parish Church is on the corner of Celedonio Salvador and Salvador de la Rosa Streets in Loyola Heights.

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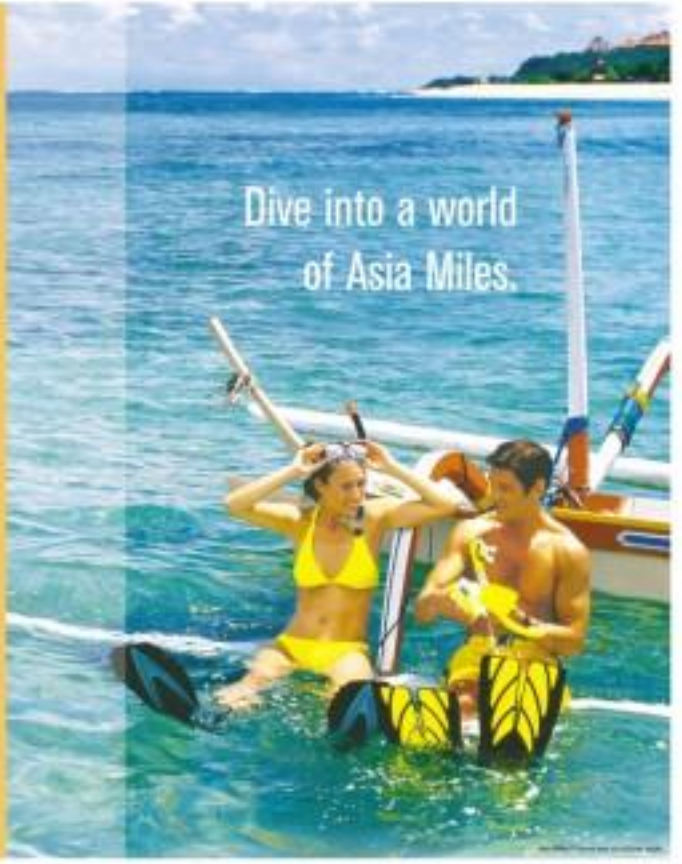
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